THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

EXPLORING THE ESSENCE OF THE CALL IN TEACHING

BY

JOHN P. EWING

©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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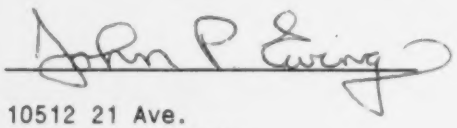

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To My Precious Family

ABSTRACT

In this study I attempted to provide an opportunity for teachers to address the essence of their motives for entering and remaining in the teaching profession. The initial focus of this research project focused on the philosophical, historical, and religious notions attached to the concept of call. From this examination of the meaning of call, I began to examine the notion of call as a concept which described the essence of purpose in a teacher's life. I then examined how the call was experienced in the daily lives of teachers as described and recorded by teachers. The research project examined the lived-experiences of six practicing teachers through a collaborative-ethnographical-narrative study.

The study was collaborative in that teachers shared anecdotal stories as a way to address the nature of the question. The collaborative nature of the study allowed me to highlight and build upon themes that emerged from the anecdotes. The collaborative efforts provided an accurate picture of personal lived-experiences as recorded by the participants.

The study was also ethnographic in nature. The purpose of the study was to preserve the context in which the lived-experiences were expressed. The stories remained unedited in the sense of preserving the idioms of the subculture of teachers and the content associated within the context of teaching experiences.

Finally, the study was narrative in design. It allowed teachers to reflect on their life-experiences in which the teachers associated specific meanings and thus derived a purpose for engaging in the teaching profession. By writing teaching stories, teachers were able to personally focus on why they teach. The research project provided an opportunity for teachers, both within the field, and those thinking of pursuing the profession to explore how they derive purpose in teaching and how other professionals in the same field express their personal experiences in establishing purpose in teaching. I also saw this research project as a personal time of self-reflection leading to professional growth and maturity.

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SECTION ONE: THE STUDY

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Historically teaching was understood as a vocation -- a calling in life. Such a call was associated with " to carry on one's station in life." In the past Western culture had established a sense of place and duty for the individual. An individual had a clearer understanding of what society expected of him or her.

Contemporary educators often view a "call" as being attached to an age when the term was used as justification for giving educators lower wages and loyalty to a task without question. As a result a "call" is often viewed as a concept of the past, not relevant in the modern world of the teacher.

But the concept of "called" can be used in many fashions. To extract what the "call" means in the context of teaching, one must highlight how the call is experienced by teachers. The nature of such a study explores what teachers say about their personal experiences as a way of examining the concept as experienced in the daily experiences of teachers.

> Understanding the way teachers think, act, feel and intend, how their practical knowledge develops over time and how it interacts with classroom phenomena will enable, it is hoped, teachers and researchers to collaborative evolve more fruitful and mutually agreeable approaches to classroom change and educational improvement. (Butt, 1982)

The term "called" has been used by many in the field of educational enquiry. Max van Manen in his book, The Tact of Teaching states,

> In present-day life, even in educational discourse, we do not hear people easily express themselves about education, teaching, or pedagogy as a vocation or as a "calling." Significantly, it is much more acceptable for someone to refer to teaching as a calling by means of a negative statement, by saying, for example, "I quit education because teaching is not really my calling." Yet, it may be important to realize that our lives with children will only be pedagogically meaningful when we feel animated or inspired by education as a calling. There is something about children that animates and draws us to them in a very concrete way. (van Manen, p.25, 1991).

Gary Fenstermacher and Johnas F. Soltis, in their book Approaches to Teaching, express the use of the term in the context of professional development through an examination of educational philosophical beliefs.

> But we believe that professional teachers only become professionals when they reflect on and choose a stance toward their calling that guides and sustains them in their important work of educating persons. (Fenstermacher, p.4, 1986)

While Fenstermacher and Soltis attempt to develop a keener sense of direction for the teacher, which is hoped will influence praxis through an examination of philosophical positions and having each teacher establish a purpose for their teaching style, the following research attempts to examine the nature of motivation and how teachers recount why they teach through a reflection of personal lived-experiences.

The call is that exercise which articulates "meaning" in the teacher's life. The deliberation of the exercise establishes a deeper sense of purpose in teaching. I believe every human being, including those who choose to be teachers, looks for meaning in what they do. Meaning is central to commitment. Establishing meaning is the essence of establishing a purpose. Without purpose activity is vacated of meaning.

By reflecting on the lived experiences which are associated with a specific activity, such as teaching, teachers discover many facets that motivate and influence their teaching praxis. Such a reflection initiates a response to the nature of teaching and directs teachers to examine their praxis through establishing a notion of why they teach.

Fenstermacher, in his book Approaches to Teaching, uses an examination of three philosophical positions to initiate professional reflection. By examining these approaches -- The Executive Approach; The Therapist Approach; and The Liberationist Approach -- Fenstermacher moves the teacher to examine their understanding of the nature of teaching. Each position examines teaching praxis in the context of a teacher's understanding of what constitutes an educated person. The process of reflection becomes as important as the final outcome of choosing a position, or the combination of positions.

> Knowing about different approaches to teaching will give you the power to choose ways to teach that will help you achieve the highest goals of one of the noblest of professions, helping individuals to become full-fledged persons." "Moreover, understanding different approaches offers ways to think about what one is doing and what relation there is between what one intends as a teacher and what one actually does with learners. This is part of being a responsible, reflective, committed educator. (Fenstermacher, p.5, 1986)

In terms of process:

> All we ask you to do regarding our position is to think seriously about the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches, about their appropriateness for dealing with human beings, and about your own commitments as an educator. However you end up,(choice you make out of three demonstrated in the book), it will be your way and your view thoughtfully and deliberately chosen; and that is our goal as we encourage you to think about various approaches to teaching. (Fenstermacher, p.5, 1986)

Fenstermacher's approach attempts to examine teacher praxis in the context of three theoretical frameworks. This research project will take personal lived experiences and apply them into the frameworks of

experiences examined and understood through teacher's knowledge. The question for this research seeks the essence of the call. It does not require a vigorous challenge of examination to whether one's philosophical view is consistent with teaching praxis. Instead, the research problem was to seek to discover how teachers establish purpose. To discover this purpose, I examined narrative stories the teachers told. The research examined not "what ought to be" but the "what is" of teacher motivation.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are defined and understood within the context of this study.

ANECDOTAL WRITING:

A biographical short account of an incident or event which focuses on pedagogical experiences.

CALL

The call is a continuing process of self-reflection which encompasses a life time of pedagogical experiences central to understanding the nature of being a pedagogue. It is the pursuit of finding meaning in what we do as pedagogues. It is not purely a philosophic exercise, but a continual process of discovering the nature of why we remain committed to teaching. It is an examination of our pedagogical practice that shapes our philosophy of instruction and an exploration of the meaningful expressions we attach to our pedagogical moments. These examinations help teachers find the true essence of purpose in the teaching profession.

COLLABORATIVE

Collaborative relates to the process of writing and documenting anecdotal stories for this study. Collaborative reflects the open exchange of ideas relevant to the stories that were selected by the participants to address the nature of the research question. The collaborative nature of the process of writing engaged the participants and the researcher to share, critique, add, and finally come to a mutual understanding as to the nature of what was being communicated in the participant's anecdote.

ESSENCE

Essence is the basic, real, and invariable nature of a thing -- its substance. Essence is the true nature or constitution of anything, as opposed to what is accidental, or illusory. In the research project a search for the <u>essence</u> of the call attempted to expose the very nature of how teachers derive purpose as established in the teachers anecdotal writings.

ETHNOGRAPHIC

Ethnographic relates to the a specific research methodology which examines the characteristics of scientific description of individual cultures or subcultures. In this research the researcher observed the subculture of teachers within the context of their daily experiences. By recording teachers' narratives the researcher attempted to preserve the essence of the subculture as understood and experienced by the teachers.

LIVED-EXPERIENCE(S)

Lived-experiences in this study point to those personal incidents in teachers' lives which provide a basis for understanding the nature of their teaching. The lived-experiences encompass incidents throughout teacher's lives. Each incident whether past or present is connected to teaching. The incidents provide a basis for understanding teachers' motives for entering and staying within the profession of teaching. The incidents are interpreted in association with other memories that teachers have experienced in their lives. When the incidents are connected through a mutual theme (understood by the teacher) they are understood as a reason or reasons which influence personal teaching praxis. The combination of lived-experiences become the narrative (or the story) of the teacher's experiences.

METAPHOR

Metaphor is the application of a word or phrase to an object or concept it does not literally denote, suggesting comparison to that object or concept. In this study metaphors denote specific characteristics associated with teaching. For example, the metaphor of parenting is understood as a specific metaphor comparing teaching to the nature of parenting.

NARRATIVE

The narrative in this study is a written record of personal anecdotal stories and/ or accounts of events, experiences, or the like, which give an account or tell the story of events associated with personal teaching experiences. Specifically, the accounts seek to find stories which focus on why teachers teach. The stories are written in the words of the participants as not to lose their authenticity. Teachers are the source of the narratives, and the narratives are a source of teacher knowledge.

PEDAGOGICAL MOMENT

Pedagogical moment relates to moments in which the teacher finds meaningful connections to the nature of their teaching experiences. Pedagogical moments are associated with responding to children as a teacher. In this study pedagogical moments are moments which are experienced in the past and or present. Pedagogical moments are specifically attached to what teachers associate as their purpose and their definitive notion of teaching.

PRAXIS

Praxis is used in this study to mean the application or use of knowledge or skills; practice, as distinguished from theory. In this study praxis relates to the educational practices of teachers as experienced by the teachers in the classroom. Praxis is influenced by a life-time of life-experiences both inside and outside the teaching profession which directs specific goals and aspirations which direct strategies for engaging students in learning.

TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

Teacher knowledge is a life-time of experiences, insights, and expressions connected to the lived-experiences of teachers. Teacher knowledge is information gathered by teachers in praxis. Teacher knowledge is the expression of teaching experiences as told by teachers, in their own voice, in the profession.

CHAPTER II

THE CALL DEFINED

> Webster's Dictionary associates the notion of call with the word vocation. Vocation can be defined as a strong impulse or inclination to follow a particular activity or career. The word is associated with activity directed toward a business, an occupation, or a profession. The word is also understood in the context of religious experience, as in a divine calling.

The notion of call is found in many scholarly educational writings. Call is defined by a variety of philosophical positions and encompasses a vast range of epistemological perspectives which effects a wide variety of pedagogical practices. This wide range of pedagogical understandings has led me to carefully examine and define the term by recognizing the multiplicity of ontological contexts in which the term is understood and experienced in the educational field.

I began the examination of "call" in the context of historical writings which pertained to educational practice. While it is important to interpret historical writings in the context of the era in which they were written, historical writings still offer many interesting facets for examining the essence of purpose in teaching. An historic overview offers an important component in understanding the term as it is experienced in our profession today.

These historical writings offer a sense of a narrative focused through a paradigm of teaching experiences. Narratives are comprised of both objective and subjective realities which compose the context in which we associate specific lived-experiences to specific meanings. Narratives are also the personal stories that humans tell each other to expose their understandings of the world in which they live.

Dr. Ted Aoki addresses the teacher's narrative in the following quotes taken from his paper, "Pedagogical Story/theming: toward Practitioners' Understanding of Teaching through Narratives."

> We see any story of the lived experiences of teachers suspended, like a tip of an iceberg, itself embracing traces of both objective meanings and lived meanings. As in any story of human experience, inevitably there is present objective meanings of the ontic situation in the form of factual information of the situation within which the story's even occurs. Stories vary, of course, in the weight of the lived experiences, but as long as a story is of human experience, in one way or another, they surface in the text as experienced themes. <u>These themes become a threshold that may allow an unfolding into the deeper realms of lived meanings</u>. (Aoki, p.9, 1985)

In quoting Kundera, Aoki concludes that there are two levels to narrative stories. Writers from the past can also be understood by their narrative which is imbued in their writing. Such narratives must be understood within the context of social conventions of the time; however, the narratives provide a rich resource of thought and practices

which were influenced by common (as in conventions associated with social norms at the time) and personal lived-experiences (personal insights and beliefs defined and understood through personal experiences) of the past. Such conventions and notions still comprise the actions and lived-experiences of each individual. We cannot escape our narratives.(lived-experiences)

> **"I've always constructed a novel [narrative] on two levels: on the first, I compose the novel's [narrative's] story: over that, I develop the themes.... Whenever a novel [narrative] abandons its themes and settles for just telling the story, it goes flat." (Kundera, p.83, 1988)**

The essence of lived-experience "the narrative" is clearly articulated in the historical writings. These essences can be understood by extracting themes from their writings. That is, we can derive a notion of "the essence of call" by examining narrative expressions which highlight the use of the term in the context of personal and social belief systems. One cannot write from a purely objective stance. An objective view is more of an abstract ideal than it is a lived reality. We are the sum of our lived-experiences and the meanings we attach to those lived-experiences. The term "called" cannot be isolated to objective realities; it must encompass the multiplicity of lived-meanings. For it is not the observation of other teachers engaging in teaching that we derive our purpose; it is the combination of what we believe about teaching, which is lived out in our daily practice, that we associate and articulate purpose. Within lived-meanings helps us find the essence of why we teach.

In beginning my study of the concept of "called," I examined an historical report written by Egerton Ryerson, one of the key people in the development of the public school system in Upper Canada. Ryerson's report was entitled, *Report on A System of Public Elementary Instruction For Upper Canada and* was printed by Lovell and Gibson by order of the Legislative Assembly in 1847 written by Egerton Ryerson. (It is interesting that this report, along with other reports, submitted by other key educators of the time provided a basis for the organization of themes which highlight the nature of the use of this term, and later association to present-day usage of such terms.)

The Metaphor of Vocation

In his report, Ryerson discusses the changing role of educators in a new era of change for Canadian educational history. He begins his argument with an outline, highlighting the qualifications, of such an educator. Ryerson quotes M. Guizot, the then Prime Minister of France to present an overview of what he (Ryerson) believed to be a picture of the teacher.

> **M. Guizot, the present Prime Minister of France, said, on introducing the Law of Primary Instruction to the Chamber of Deputies in 1833: 'All the provisions hitherto described would be of none effect, if we took no pains to procure for the public School thus constituted an able Master, and worthy of the high vocation of instructing the people. It cannot be too**

> often repeated, that it is the Master that makes the School. What a well-assorted union of qualities is required to constitute a good Master! A good Master ought to be a man who knows much more than he is called upon to teach, that he may teach with intelligence and with taste; who is to live in a humble sphere,and yet have a noble and elevated spirit that he may preserve that dignity of mind and of deportment without which he will never obtain the respect and confidence of families; who possess a rare mixture of gentleness and firmness; for, inferior though he be, in station, to many individuals in the Communes, he ought to be the obsequious servant of none; a man not ignorant of his rights, but thinking much more of his duties; shewing to all a good example and serving to all as a counsellor; not given to change his condition, but satisfied with his situation, *because it gives him the power of doing good; and who has made up his mind to live and to die in the service of Primary instruction, which to him is the service of God and his fellow creatures*...
> (Ryerson, p.157, 1847)

M. Guizot uses the following phrase which begins the discussion of professionalism "... worthy of the high vocation of instructing the people..." One could argue that the wording is simply a reflection of the jargon of the time, for example as an implied ideal, rather than a practiced and believed reality. Implicit in the term was that teaching was an act of subservience to a specific community of people. It was a "worthy calling" because it embraced many social ideals like humility and servanthood. It was to be an honour to serve those of the community. Whether the term was used as an instrument of power is not the focus of this research; therefore, it is important to view the term in the context of what it was supposed to do for teachers who believed that their profession was "indeed a high calling."

That teaching is considered a "calling" is obvious. There is a sense in Ryerson's wording that vocation is considered an important part of life. In historical Canadian society knowing one's "station" in life was considered very important. Purpose was derived by the station a person held in life. To doubt one's station or allotment in life was to doubt the leading of God and an individual's commitment to social duty.

> ...he ought to be the obsequious servant of none; a man not ignorant of his rights, but thinking much more of his duties; shewing to all a good example and serving to all as a counsellor; not given to change his condition, but satisfied with his situation, *because it gives him the power of doing good; and who has made up his mind to live and to die in the service of Primary instruction, which to him is the service of God and his fellow creatures*...(Ryerson, p.157, 1847)

In the final lines of this quote we discover Ryerson's notion of the call. The call was a word used to explain the phenomena of motivation or purpose in the life of the teacher. The teacher was to be consumed with service. Once again it is not the point of this research project to examine whether this was good or bad for teachers, rather my

work sought to discover and define the term as a concept that explains why teachers do the things they do.

The teacher established purpose by fulfilling the expectations of a given society in which a specific role was understood. Purpose was derived by understanding such a role and attempting to fulfill it. In terms of lived-experience such a notion is at best limited. In a limited sense the teacher was to be motivated by a response to social duty. Teaching was a "service to God and to his or her fellow creatures." This position supports the assertion Guizot makes, when he calls teaching a "high vocation." Teaching was considered a worthy vocation because it served God by preserving social order.

As a result, the motivation for teaching was understood as an agent of stability. A sense of responsibility was one of the prime factors of establishing purpose. Though we might object to such noble ideals, I would suggest that the historical writings demonstrate the need for a clearly defined purpose in teaching. In the era in which Ryerson wrote there appeared little doubt to what should govern the purpose. It was to be a consciousness choice to maintain and replicate the society which was perceived as being progressive and worthy of replication.

In this research project it is important to note that it was understood that specific vocations implied specific motivations and purpose. The question today is not whether these implied meanings are right or wrong, given the context of the society in which they were derived, but rather that to define the call is in essence to examine the nature of our meanings to the activity of teaching and how purpose is found in the meanings we attach to the activity of teaching.

Purpose was established by a commitment to service, influenced by a commitment to a higher-being, and a commonality toward others of God's creation. Vocation was understood in the terms of duty to a role, established for the betterment of society. One was "called" to a profession. One responded to, in essence, a vocation.

In this sense the "essence of the call" embodies this historical sense of the term. Though we may not associate the term call in this manner today; nevertheless, we are left with the legacy of such a notion.

More important, the essence of the call demands that we question the nature of our motivation. What motivates educators to teach? Are we motivated by a duty to our country? Are we motivated by a duty to some faith in a Higher Being? Are we motivated by a conscious, or unconscious, political or philosophical understanding of the world? Are we motivated by children? The definition of call addresses our purpose by examining personal motives for teaching. Obviously, there may be many different reasons given for teaching. Reasons will be attached to what we believe, our life-experiences, and the daily situations in which we are engaged in. A definition of the call must encompass these understandings.

The Metaphor of Technician

It is common to believe that the call was based purely on a "feeling" or "belief" that one was directed by a social, political, or religious aspiration to make gains through teaching, and that such a intrinsic compelling drive constituted a call to teaching. Yet,

interestingly, Ryerson draws a correlation between the "belief of call," as an inner conviction driven by a system of beliefs, and an "identification of call," how it must be also observable in daily educational practice.

It is also important that educators were called to reflect upon their technical abilities as teachers. The final test was not that they acted in faith -- were compelled to be teachers -- but that they were capable of their assigned duties. The vocation demanded that both of these elements be addressed. Ryerson draws special attention to Guizot's observations in this regard.

Educators understood a relationship between practice and call. The call was identified or "confirmed" by a candidate's ability to perform specific tasks (skills) associated with specific required duties of the vocation. There is a distinction made here that is important. It is not enough to be drawn to the profession through a social burden. The "call" was understood as being "observable in practice." Thus, our understanding of the term must not be only associated with the conventions of religious or philosophic beliefs, but it must translate itself into an observable action found in the skills needed to teach.

We can understand the use of the call as being understood as one's "natural" or trained abilities aligning to one's choice of careers. Guizot writes:

> **In Prussia and in Saxony as well as in Scotland, the power of commanding and retaining the attention of the class is held to be a *sine qua non* in a Teacher"s qualifications. If he has not talent, skill, vivacity, or resources of anecdote, and wit sufficient to arouse and retain the attention of his pupils during the accustomed period of recitation, he is deemed to have mistaken his calling, and receives a significant hint to change his vocation. (Ryerson, p.167, 1847)**

Guizot implies that educators were asked to reflect about the nature of their call by examining whether they had specific technical skills to accomplish the task at hand. The focus was on communicative skills, as suggested by Guizot's observations, "**and wit sufficient to arouse and retain the attention of his pupils.**" Thus, "call" must be defined in a context which joins together a sense of duty and an ability to be successful in such an assigned duty.

As we view the call in our contemporary world, the call must be understood in the context of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and also in terms of our attention to pedagogical expertise. The essence of call demands that the concept be examined in terms of the action and purpose attached to the actions. The two cannot be divorced from each other. Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are therefore implied elements of defining "the call."

Fenstermacher and Soltis in their book Approaches to Teaching use the term call in the context of vocation and build upon the presupposition spoken of earlier in this chapter.

> **But we believe that professional teachers only become professionals when they reflect on and choose a stance toward their calling that guides and sustains them in their important work of educating persons. (Fenstermacher & Soltis, p.4, 1986)**

It is not enough to suggest that Fenstermacher's uses the term simply to denote a job. Rather, it is important to understand that when he (Fenstermacher) uses the term it is in the context of his notion of the praxis of teaching. Fenstermacher draws into his reference to "calling" an assortment of understandings which are attached to the essence of his understanding of professional.

Professional is understood in terms of an active participatory action of pedagogues engaged in a process of analyzing their effectiveness in terms of educational practice through a process of philosophical examinations which will direct the teacher to a deeper sense of purpose.

The Fenstermacher and Soltis' book, Approaches to Teaching, deals with the central question surrounding how teachers define the "educated person." The exercise has teachers examine three philosophical positions -- Executive approach, Therapist approach, and Liberationist approach -- and attempts to relate these approaches to classroom practice. Fenstermacher and Soltis use the following descriptions of the approaches to engage the teacher in professional reflection:

> The executive approach views the teacher as an executor, a person charged with bringing about certain learnings, using the best skills and techniques available. Contemporary research on the effects of teaching and learning is very important to this approach. It provides the teacher with techniques and understandings to use in the management of the classroom and the production of learning.
>
> The therapist approach views the teacher as an empathetic person charged with helping individuals grow personally and reach a high level of self-actualization, understanding, and acceptance. Psychotherapy, humanistic psychology, and existential philosophy underwrite this view, which focuses on students' developing their own selves as authentic persons through personally meaningful educational experiences.
>
> The liberationist approach views the teacher as a liberator, a freer of the individual's mind and a developer of well-rounded, autonomous, rational, and moral human beings. The classical idea of a liberal education underwrites the contemporary mainstream version of this approach...(Fenstermacher & Soltis, p.4-5, 1986)

Fenstermacher and Soltis suggest that knowledge is power and that acquainting the teacher with the various views empowers them to achieve their goals as teachers. The exercise of reflection is also important as it provides a mechanism for teachers to grow as professionals.

> We also believe that, in this instance, knowledge is power. Knowing about different approaches to teaching will give you the power to choose ways to teach that will help you achieve the highest goals of one of the noblest of professions, helping individuals to become full-fledged persons. Moreover, understanding different approaches offers a ways to think about

> what one is doing and what relation there is between what one intends as a teacher and what one actually does with learners. This is part of being a responsible, reflective, committed educator. (Fenstermacher & Soltis, p.5, 1986)

In my research I suggest similar reflection upon the call in teaching as a way of examining the purpose which directs teaching praxis. Both the exercise of self-reflection and the knowledge that is gained through self-reflection are beneficial to professional development. The authors suppose that philosophical positions direct educational practice. Fenstermacher and Soltis' exercise of professional reflection purposes to help teachers define the essence of why they do the things they do as teachers. Examining the call through an examination of educational lived-experiences also establishes this same sense of professionalism. Therefore, such an exercise leading to professional growth helps the teacher to embrace the notion of call.

Central to Fenstermacher and Soltis' perspective of call is that the teacher is not merely motivated by perceived social goals, but the ideal of motivation is more instrinsically based. The perspective recognizes the individualism of each teacher while also recognizing the action of teaching being moved by what teachers believe about the purpose of teaching.

An important distinction must be made in understanding Guizot's ideas and Fenstermacher and Soltis' concept of individual teacher motivation. Guizot's motivation is explained in terms of common social norms associated with social ideals of time. Guizot also points to an affirmation of teaching through positive student response. Motivation was also associated with teaching praxis as envisioned by social responsibilities. Soltis and Fenstermacher ask teachers to move beyond the question of whether individuals believe they can teach, to address what is their purpose in teaching the way they do. Soltis and Fenstermacher ask: What is the essence or purpose behind their teaching strategies? What drives their motivation? While Soltis and Fenstermacher come to believe that an understanding of the "educated person" will lead to such a response, my research attempts to define call in terms of the question why a person should bother to move toward being a professional.

The essence of call embraces Fenstermacher and Soltis' conception of the call, while also attempting to move beyond the limitations imposed by Guizot. That success is important to teachers is in itself part of the search for the definition of "the call." The call looks to find how teachers understand (1) the experiences they perceive that drive them to success and (2) what they view as success. The answers to these questions address the nature of purpose and, thus, the essence of the call.

The essence of call then must be defined as the culmination of belief systems and teaching experiences which influence the meanings attached to classroom experiences. Rather than believe that calling is disassociated with practice, the term embraces the nature and praxis of teaching.

The deliberation of the exercise establishes cause and purpose in teaching. Such an exercise is viewed as a process. As a teacher, one engages in a process of reflection which directs the person toward a philosophical stance which provides and establishes a conscious and purposeful goal in engaging in a pedagogical role. Within such an

understanding all human beings look for meaning in each activity they are engaged in. Meaning is central to commitment. Establishing meaning is the essence of motivation. Without motivation a particular activity is vacated. Our definitive notion of call must embrace these understandings.

The Metaphor of Parenting

While the call is often associated with what identifies our willingness to serve, central to the notion is what animates us. Or, to state it in a question, why do we keep returning to the activity of teaching? The term call can be understood as a parenting role, simply because it is the call of children that the teacher responds to. Ryerson draws the following observations from teachers in the field:

> The third circumstance I mentioned above was the beautiful relation of harmony and affection which subsisted between Teacher and pupils....
>
> I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the Teacher"s bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of duty first, and then affection , on the part of the Teacher--of affection first, and then duty on the part of the scholar. The Teacher"s manner was better than parental, for it had a parent's tenderness and vigilance, without the foolish doatings or indulgences, to which parental affection is prone.
>
> ...Teacher felicitates him upon his [pupils] success; perhaps seizes, and shakes him by the hand in token of congratulation; and when the difficulty has been really formidable, and the effort triumphant, I have seen the Teacher catch up the child in his arms, and embrace him, as though he were not able to contain his joy...(Ryerson, p.165-169, 1847)

This writing portrays a delicate balance that exists between the teacher being a purveyor of knowledge -- the scholar -- and that of the parental role of teaching --encourager, guide, and mentor. Central to this notion is the child. In this context Ryerson focuses our attention on the call as seen as a response to a student -- the child.

The call cannot be divorced from the teacher/pupil relationship. One cannot be said to be called, if within such an activity the educator is not motivated by a sense of responding to the student.

Max van Manen, in his book The Tact of Teaching, uses the term in which it is associated with a parental response to the child's calling. The call is viewed from the perspective of shared pedagogical experiences in which the teacher responds to educational needs of a child. It is this response that expresses the essence of the call. Max van Manen writes:

> In present-day life, even in educational discourse, we do not hear people easily express themselves about education, teaching, or pedagogy as a vocation or as a "calling."

> Significantly, it is much more acceptable for someone to refer to teaching as a calling by means of a negative statement, by saying, for example, "I quit education because teaching is not really my calling." Yet, it may be important to realize that our lives with children will only be pedagogical meaningful when we feel animated or inspired by education as a calling. There is something about children that animates and draws us to them in a very concrete way. (van Manen, p.25, 1991)

The call here is associated with a relationship of the importance of finding "pedagogical meaning" in the activity of teaching. The call is the experience that draws us to the child in a very concrete way. What influences that call or what can it be taught through courses is not important here. What is important is that the call can be used in terms of a pedagogical readiness and experienced as a strong understanding of purpose that compels the pedagogue to such an activity. This concept of call also confirms the nature of purpose while engaging in such an activity. The call is once again attached to meaning activity and educational praxis. The definitive notion of call must embrace the child and therefore the teacher as parent.

Ted Aoki in his paper entitled "Pedagogical Story/Theming: Toward Practitioner Understanding of Teaching through Narratives" relates another element to the definition of "called." Aoki writes: What is the place of listening for those who are engaged in pedagogical living with children in our schools?

> Teaching as listening is twofold. First of all, the teacher needs to be so attuned in the pedagogical living with children that he/she can hear their voices. Moreover, the teacher needs to be so attuned to allow a listening to the voice of the good in the lived situation with children. Something I need to explore is that the true power of teaching lies in the teacher"s sensitive ability to respond to the calling of this good--a response-ability that flows from a true listening to that which calls upon us to be teachers. Are we not glimpsing here our being as teachers, teaching as a true vocation--a calling? (Aoki, p.9, 1985)

Aoki provides a basis for understanding two elements in defining this term. First, the term is likened to action. It is a teacher responding to a voice. It is characterized by sensitivity. It is a willingness to be responsive to the needs of each child.

Second, Aoki focuses on an epistemological reference to our motivation, our being, as teacher. The call is associated to understanding the very nature of why we teach. It explores our motivations for such an enterprise and asks us, as educators, to examine such motivation to see if it is driven by the first response, responding to the child. This point is suggested in his last lines, "**Are we not glimpsing here our being as teachers, teaching as a true vocation--a calling?**" It is the child in the classroom who motivates us. We are drawn by the individual needs of the child before us. Our conception of the call must articulate and embrace the true nature of teacher motivation.

The Metaphor of Humanitarian

Found in the nature of the purpose of education, Ryerson and his contemporaries saw an important mandate in teaching which was the development of active citizenship within the student. In this context education was seen as a vehicle to train and prepare students to be active and positive contributors of their society. The teachers' role was one of humanitarian responsibility. Teachers were the ones who would shape tomorrow's society. In Ryerson's definition of education he writes:

> By education, I mean not the mere acquisition of certain arts or of certain branches of knowledge, but that instruction and discipline which qualify and dispose the subjects of it for their appropriate duties and employments of life, as Christians, as persons of business, and also as members of the civil community in which they live." (Ryerson, p.9. 1847)
>
> The basis of an educational structure adapted to this end should be as broad as the population of the country; and its loftiest elevation should equal the highest demands of the learned professions, adapting its gradation of schools to the wants of the several classes of the community, and their respective employments or professions, the one rising above the other--the one conducting to the other; yet each complete in itself for the degree of education it imparts; a character of uniformity as to fundamental principles pervading the whole: the whole based upon the principles of Christianity, and uniting the combined influence and support of the Government and the people. (Ryerson, p.10, 1847)

The call to the profession was understood in terms of a responsibility to train, influence, and instruct young people into meaningful, active, and responsible citizenship. Teachers who were not driven by such motivation could not properly fulfill the role that was expected of them given the context of the time.

Thus we can understand that historical writings shed a context in which the teachers' role was understood in terms of specific characteristics and guiding motivations for such service. Purpose was established in a sense of provision for the student. It is a sense of securing the future for those we teach. This element of the call does not see the immediate results. In fact, it is a purpose derived in hope and is understood in terms of making a difference. The call looks at the final product of children in their own sphere of lived-experience outside the classroom.

Conclusion

Finally, "the essence of call" embraces each of the metaphors: The Metaphor of Vocation, The Metaphor of Technician, The Metaphor of Parent, and Metaphor of Humanitarian. Each metaphor is understood as a process in which we as teachers articulate and examine how we derive, understand, and experience purpose in our educational praxis.

The call is thus a continuing process of self-reflection which encompasses a life time of pedagogical experiences central to understanding the nature of being a pedagogue. To answer the call of teaching is to pursue the path of finding meaning in what we do as pedagogues. It is not purely a philosophic exercise, but a continual process of discovering the nature of why we remain committed to teaching. It is an examination of our pedagogical practice that shapes our philosophy of instruction, and an exploration of the meaningful expressions we attach to those pedagogical moments where we find the true essence of purpose in the teaching profession.

CHAPTER III

ARRIVING AT THE QUESTION

The call is a continuing process of self-reflection which encompasses a life time of pedagogical experiences central to understanding the nature of being a pedagogue. It is the pursuit of finding meaning in what we do as pedagogues. It is not purely a philosophic exercise, but a continual process of discovering the nature of why we remain committed to teaching. It is an examination of our pedagogical practice that shapes our philosophy of instruction, and an exploration of the meaningful expressions we attach to our pedagogical moments that we find the true essence of purpose in the teaching profession.

To explore the question: What is the essence of being called in teaching?" is to engage in a personal reflective process in an attempt to discover the essence of being a teacher. By following such a pursuit, we heighten our awareness of the meanings we attach to our daily teaching activities. Our pursuit helps us look at our actions, not in terms of developing new strategies for engaging our students but, more importantly, by addressing why we should bother to engage our students in the first place. It seeks to discover the essence of being "teacher." It seeks to find how we derive our purpose for teaching.

Coming to my research question began as a process to reflect on my own career as a teacher. The question provided me an opportunity to examine personal pedagogical experiences. An examination of personal pedagogical practice is central to the pursuit of the question, for the call cannot be divorced from pedagogical practice. It is in essence the nature of pedagogical praxis.

The essence of the call to teaching is experienced daily in each teachable moment in our classrooms. The meanings we attach to those daily experiences of teaching which animate our actions with children are those shaped and molded by a lifetime of experiences in which we draw from and associate to that moment of teaching. This combination of significant pedagogical moments produces a sense of purpose in our professional careers. Coming to the question was a journey of discovering the pedagogue in me through an examination of personal and meaningful pedagogical moments.

Coming to the Concept of the Call

I first became acquainted with the concept of call during the years I spent as an ordained minister of religion. Though the concept was understood differently than I see it today, nevertheless it lay a foundation which drew me to ask the question in this research project. What I discovered by reviewing my personal interaction with the term was that the very process of such an exercise helped me to arrive at a fuller, more exact picture of how the call has been applied in my life.

During the years of being a minister of religion, I found that the term <u>called</u> was attached to a number of different notions. First, it was defined in terms of an act of self-reflection, whereupon an individual examined the intrinsic and extrinsic motives for entering the ministry.

The inner reflection was to identify whether an individual manifested specific skills, mannerisms, and belief-systems which constituted a call to the ministerial profession. The call was something that provided a basis for entering the ministry. It provided a purpose and an confirmation for service.

Second, the notion of call was understood in the context of religious faith and, therefore, was also presumed as a Divine calling. In this sense the call was a demonstration of commitment to a task based upon a strong belief that God had initiated such a call and had led an individual to accomplish a specific task which would both glorify God and address the needs of people. Third, the concept was also viewed in terms of a special calling. This special calling would be manifested in a call where some person would perform a task that, when measured by what was considered a normal duty of an office, went beyond the normal sense of duty. The Old Testament account of Nehemiah provides such an example:

> **The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah...Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire." Now it came about when I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven...Now I was the cupbearer to the king. (Neh.1: 1-11)**

Nehemiah was an Israelite living in Babylon serving as a cupbearer for King Artaxerxes I. After hearing the news of the terrible conditions that had befallen his fellow people during their years of enforced captivity, Nehemiah responded by using his social position to ask King Artaxerxes to allow him to return to his homeland and rebuild the city which had been destroyed during years of war. After the King granted Nehemiah permission to leave, Nehemiah left the comfort and security of his home and personally oversaw the relief efforts.

Nehemiah became instrumental in leading a distressed group of people to rebuild the broken walls of the city Jerusalem. He believed rebuilding the walls would afford the inhabitants protection and secure within the people a new hope for the future. The work was not easy. It required Nehemiah to face all types of trials including: threats to his life, threats to his friends, threats to his reputation, and constant barrage of insults which tested his resolve daily. Even when the people were discouraged and fearful and wanted to leave the work, Nehemiah remained faithful and committed to the task. Nehemiah's own record provides an understanding of what is meant by a special call.

History also records others who have left comfortable zones of familiarity to pursue insurmountable tasks. Many individuals have given their lives to accomplish the task before them. Mother Teresa and her unselfish faithfulness to the poor of India; Martin Luther King who envisioned a dream where every person would experience equality; and

Ghandi's passionate call to peace in his homeland through non-violence are just a few examples.

Each of these people responded to a sense of loyalty to a Higher Being. Each was moved with compassion toward human sufferings and needs around them. Each experienced the essence of Divine and special calling.

While not every individual will feel compelled to rebuild cities or devote an entire life to those who society has forsaken, the essence of call is nevertheless part of our human record. What I found in my exploration of the concept was a commonalty in the experience. I asked myself: What does the call really suggest? I came to the conclusion that the call is that essence of human experience that accounts for why we do the things we do. The call has some common elements, but also is as individual as the person who experiences the phenomena.

While I believe that the call can be understood solely in terms of an intellectual exercise, I also believe that a true understanding of the call cannot be dismissed from observable life-experiences. My question came as a result of examining the nature of the call as experienced through observable life-experiences.

In coming to the question I also reflected on the process of identifying a call in a person's life. Central to my examination was discovering the paths we use to derive purpose for our actions. In the religious context this is identified through the practice of ordination.

The practice of ordination varies in form from denomination to denomination, but central to each distinctive practice is an underlying purpose behind such an activity. That purpose was to discover whether others believed an individual had the characteristics to carry out the duties of the office of minister.

In the specific denomination I served, ordination consisted of a five-year process of theological testing before various councils and an affirmation of individual characteristics observed by the local congregation which affirmed a person's ability to carry out the duties required by the office. Individual church leaders were asked to identify characteristics in the individual that associated them with a strong belief in God, the skills, personality, and social mannerisms that suggested to them a person would make a good candidate for ministry. (Teachers might understand this in their own profession as the process in which teachers become certified, though certification looks at practice rather than motive behind the practice.)

The call was attached to the belief that God initiated (ordained) a call by providing a basis of faith and equipping specific characteristics in an individual which identified that individual as being "set apart" (called) for ministry. Individuals were required to identify such a call, but it was God who dispensed such qualifications to the individual.

The teaching was supported by a New Testament doctrine in the divine call of people to the ministry of the early church. Paul's letter to the Romans states in reference to the apostle that he was "Called as an apostle." The original Greek can be translated "set-apart." The idea was that a person is chosen to a specific duty by Divine intervention in order to a specific ministry ordained (commissioned) by God.

Built within this tradition is the understanding of legitimacy based upon a notion of confirmation of commitment to the office, rather than legitimacy based on a notion of a Divine sanctioned hierarchical

ecclesiastical social standing. To be ordained is to suggest being a willing servant of all for the sake of Jesus Christ.

The call in this case was a public confirmation of specific characteristics which were believed to suggest a suitableness for public ministry. Implied in the context of religious understanding is the notion that commitment to call is directly correlated to one's commitment to faith. To deny call is to deny faith. Such a limited understanding of call challenged me to address the issue and seek to understand it in terms of establishing purpose for activity.

Therefore coming to the question was in itself a personal journey to wrestle with the concept of purpose as I sought to understand the differing concepts of call as I moved from one profession and, in turn, grappling with the concept in the context of training for another profession. I sought to find meaning and attach to some reason for changing the focus of careers. Had I abandoned a calling? The answer was, of course, no.

Calling must be understood not in terms of a once in a lifetime experience but a continual, changing, and developing notion of establishing purpose in the activities we do. The very process of initiating such self-reflection is as important to my professional development as addressing and discovering what reasons I give for doing the things I do. What I discovered was that my call (purpose) wasn't ending with a change in careers, it was merely being established as part of a lifetime of teaching experiences.

The intellectual reflection allowed me an opportunity to address why I do the things I love to do. In a sense my research was my search to find personal meaning in change, for I found that, when the greatest doubts surround me, it is important to reflect on the meaningful foundations which influence my actions. Without establishing a purpose for what I am doing, I leave myself vulnerable to whine, "Why bother doing it anymore?" I discovered that, in order to address the call, the question must have us reflect on our past to find pedagogical connections to our present.

The call then is associated with our past as well as our present. My reflection about what led me to teaching took me back to my childhood. It is there in life that the establishment and desire to teach was first initiated.

My first sense of wanting to teach was reflected in my interest as a young child in reading and a constant appetite to learn more about my environment. I enjoyed exploration, especially the areas that interested me such as hockey, science (astronomy), fishing, wildlife, photography, history, war, electronics, and geology. I enjoyed the anticipation and the satisfaction of each new skill or piece of knowledge that became part of my greater experience. To explore this world became, and is, my greatest joy.

My love of discovery influenced my teaching early in life. I loved to model what I had learned. I could hardly wait to unload my treasure of discoveries for the day. I was always conscious of the need for an audience to share my new-found experiences with. (Sometimes my audience wasn't always as excited or receptive as I was)

I spent countless hours recounting my stories and listening to my father's stories. Each story became a new threshold of learning. I would live with him as he recounted his stories of France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany during the World War II. I was his comrade in thought as we

would engage in the various adventures that he recounted from his past. We walked; we talked; we lived the essence of the pedagogical moment.

As my horizons expanded I became interested in sports. As a young teenager I played hockey and coached two younger hockey teams. At fifteen years of age, I was instructing senior men's hockey, teaching skills like shooting, puck control, passing, skating, and other strategies that were part of the game. I was comfortable in the environment of teaching. The call to teaching was being established in my life and it was being identified by others.

I was also developing a confidence and competence in the skills needed to be a teacher. Taking every opportunity to teach demonstrated a growing desire to teach. I was motivated and concerned for my students. I wanted them to enjoy the sport as much as I did. I wanted them to share my skills so they could feel the success I enjoyed.

As I reflect on those early years, I marvel at how specific interests guided my opportunities. As I talked to many educators in the field, I found it interesting that many of them related stories to me that attached identified purpose in teaching to events that were part of their youth. I surmised from this observation that the essence of call is not so divorced from our lived-experiences as I first thought.

The call had to be understood as an accumulation of life-experiences that we join together. The common thread are pedagogical moments. The common thread is the establishment of present purpose with a life-time record of what we enjoy to do. The link that connects to the present moment is interesting. The accumulation of life-experiences draw together to support a present reason for being involved in an activity such as teaching intrigued me.

Finally, coming to the question was influenced by an interest in educational literature which actually used the term, though admittedly with differing perspectives. I began to wonder why the term had remained in our literature? Was there an historic reason for the concept remaining in our verbalize? What was the original definition of the term? What was the term associated with? Had the notion of call changed? These questions began to shape the research both in terms of the question, the purpose of the study, and the methodology employed to address the question.

I was also interested in examining the term as engendered by the writers and examine it through the lived experiences of teachers active in the field. I anticipated that the question might be able to dig beneath the proverbial heap of conventional philosophic genre which, when exposed, may reveal the essence of the word -- decontextualized, in a sense, but impregnated with the meaning and attached to the essence of a life time of pedagogical lived-experiences.

The nature of the question also provided me with an understanding of the question in terms of how such a question would have to be approached and researched. The question addresses the "essence" of the call rather than a description of how people define a call. I wished to explore how purpose was understood in terms of lived-experiences. The question demanded that teachers be able to address it using their own stories, told in their own voices.

As I reflect about my question, I realized that it is a question that has arisen from the context of my entire life. It is a question that has unfolded and has been addressed at various intervals in my life. It is also a question that surrounds the question of purpose in

life, the purpose of being. It is a question that has brought to me a time to reflect on life goals.

It has helped me to identify, mature, and utilize many gifts (skills) that I have obtained through life-experiences. It is a question that has invited me to pursue the impossible, while directing me to interpersonal and personal reflection. The question has not only embodied my presence as teacher, but it has embodied my understanding of what it means for others. For within the notion of call is also the notion of sharing a similar experience with teachers active in the field.

Finally, without reservation, my question seeks to find a growing sense of purpose in what I love to do -- teaching children. It has directed me into learning more about my field of interests, and presently has brought me from one career to another. My call is reflected through my lived- experiences--my lived-experiences understood by the meanings I attach to each moment; the combinations of lived-meanings together establish my purpose. My purpose is established in the notion of the call. The process of discovery is the essence and nature of the call.

It is not enough to ask: do I have a call? That is to suppose a restricted philosophical, or theological understanding of the term. The process of engendering a community of understandings and articulating such understandings through individual narratives engenders a careful wording of the question. It is in this context the researcher asks: What is the essence of the call to teaching? To discover the essence is to illuminate and discover the pedagogue.

CHAPTER IV

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The central purpose of study is to examine the essence of the call to teaching as experienced by educators and told through personal narratives expressed in the language of educators in the field. The study will outline the educator's understanding of their call to teaching. In doing so, teachers will become central in a study about their own motivations for teaching. The study will attempt to provide a vehicle of expression as well as a vehicle to model and to have educators experience self-reflection focused in terms of their professional experience. Eisner justifies such a study by stating:

> **This preoccupation with prescription has led to the formation of bodies of professional knowledge which have been largely ignored by professionals-in-action since they have found that little of this prescriptive technology is appropriate to specific situations whose nature is uniquely personal, instinctive, intuitive, reflective, and practical (Eisner, 1979, 983, Schwab, 1969, 1971).**

The purpose of this study is to examine one aspect of the synergy that exists in the beliefs and praxis of educators. The nature of the study examines areas which are "personal, instinctive, intuitive, reflective, and practical" (Eisner, 1979, 1983; Schwab, 1969, 1971). The study does not try to examine teaching from a theoretical base or attempt to formulate conclusions based on a notion of cause and effect relationships. The study attempts to examine the synergy that exists between educational theory, and praxis, as it is conveyed in terms of lived-experiences.

This research is not merely intended to be observational in nature, but participant centered in lived-experience. The research is itself designed to become an instrument to help teachers engage in the kind of professional reflection that leads educators through a process of professional development as they actively participate in the research project. The teacher is the source of knowledge in this study. The purpose of the study is fourfold in nature:

(1) To Increase Knowledge in the Field of Education

The study provides an opportunity to expand the knowledge in the field of education by examining through a meta-narrative-ethno-autobiographical study what teachers say about their teaching experiences in terms of how they establish purpose for doing what they are doing. Many educators have indicated that without an established purpose for teaching, teachers cannot achieve the success they wish for themselves in their careers.

(2) To Encourage Teacher Professional Development

The study attempts to contribute to the personal development of teachers, from all levels of experience, by helping them direct themselves in an examination of what it personally means for them to be

in the teaching profession. This reflection provides educators an opportunity to affirm similar or dissimilar experiences with other educators in the field.

The exercise will also provide direction for examining their own backgrounds that may help them choose the career. The research will provide a basis for educators to reflect about the nature of their career and make wise choices in relation to their teaching careers based on these observations. At the least, the study will demonstrate the need of professionals to pursue excellence and growth within their chosen fields of interests.

For some teachers the process of reflection will present an opportunity for ongoing professional reflective practice. Other teachers may find the information new, innovative, and helpful for initiating and establishing professional growth. For a number of teachers there will be a reacquaintance to this concept of the call, through identifying similarities with their peers, which will provide a new impetus to renewal and refreshment in their demanding careers. Richard Butt states, "in their usual role as audience, they [teachers] have few opportunities to see the more reflective, knowledgeable side of their colleagues..." (Butt, 1982)

(3) To Provide a Basis For Pre-Professional Reflection

Younger teachers enter the teaching profession for a variety of motives. This study will present to new recruits the stories of those in the profession who can share their wealth of knowledge and experience with those who are just beginning. For some beginning teachers the study will provide a place of reference for examining their own reasons for entering the profession. For others, it will help identify a common ground with those in the profession. Still for others who are not convinced of their choice to follow the teaching career, the study may provide another avenue which will help explore alternative life-careers. For some students the study might even help them choose not to pursue the teaching profession.

> **The nature of the personal knowledge that teachers possess and exhibit has been conceptualized in whole or in part in a growing number of ways. Besides, in Pinar's (1986) notion of architecture of self, which is the private and personal self that teachers bring with them into teacher, Pinar (1978) also used the idea of *currere*, the course of life's experience, past, present, and future whereby the individual interacting with context continually lives out and evolves the architecture of self. (Butt, 1982)**

(4) To Provide a Basis for Personal Professional Growth

Finally, I have undertaken this study as part of my own personal understanding of the nature of the call. My understanding of call has taken on new meaning and has become synonymous with professionalism and personal professional growth.

The call has led me to identify weaknesses, strengths, motives, while establishing purpose to pursue and stay within the profession. The study will provide valuable insight into the concept of call as well as interaction for others to acquaint themselves in similar journeys.

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

Preliminary Fielding of The Question

I conducted a preliminary study of the question was conducted during the month of January, 1992, at the University of Alberta. The purpose of the preliminary study was to determine whether the initial question could be understood and addressed by educators in the field. During this preliminary study, I compiled notes during informal conversations with numerous professionals active in the field of education who were living in the Edmonton area.

The feedback gained from these initial interviews helped to define, develop, and articulate the essence of the question. This process also helped to organize and develop a methodology of research which would lead educators to understand and address the nature of the question.

Results of the Preliminary Study

The preliminary study demonstrated my need to acquaint teachers with information about the study. Preliminary results confirmed that many educators could not address the question without a philosophical context. The philosophical context orientated the participants to the nature and purpose of the question. The preliminary findings also indicated that participants needed to be given information regarding narrative expression. After the material was presented in written form to the participants, they were able to provide examples of lived-experiences that addressed the nature of the question.

To address the findings of the preliminary research, I developed an information package (see Appendix A) which provided a context to orientate prospective participants in the research before they began the study. The information package also included an explanation of the various components of the research methodology because many educators were not familiar with narrative writing.

Philosophical Basis for Methodology

Since the study addressed how purpose is experienced in the lives of teachers the research methodology was developed in such a way as to ensure that the lived-experiences of teachers were being addressed. The esoteric nature of the question invited me to develop a methodology that was sensitive to the experience of pedagogy, specifically in identifying the nature of purpose as understood by educators in the field through the teachers' own insights as expressed in their own words.

It seemed only natural to allow teachers to talk about their personal experiences in their own language. It is impossible to observe from a distance that which can only be revealed from those experiencing the action which is imbued with a multiplicity of understandings and meanings.

The research methodology model was also guided by an awareness of the multiple purposes established in the study and an awareness of the limitations (teachers' busy time schedules confirmed a need to make the

survey questions short and to the point) and delimitations established in the study. The following research model provided a methodology that helped place the knowledge in context of educators who experience the phenomena explored in the question.

Methodological Design

The Research Design included six stages: 1) Selection of participants; 2) Biographical Data Collection; 3) Professional Career Questionnaire; 4) Narrative Anecdotal Data Collection; 5) Post-Reflection; and, 6) Review and organization of material into themes.

Selection of Participants

Initial contacts with educators were made at the University of Alberta and also at the school where I taught. The initial contacts also provided a number of connections with other professional educators in the field who were interested in participating in the study.

I conducted short informal interviews with each prospective participant before selecting individuals for the study. At the initial interview I provided an overview of the research and the responsibility of the participants in the study. The participants were asked to consider whether they would like to be part of the study, given the nature of the study and the time commitments that were part of the study.

Each prospective participant was then handed a questionnaire package (see Appendix A) which provided an overview of the research, time requirements, and ethical considerations, and guarantees of anonymity which governed such research.

Each prospective participant was asked to read the research material and determine if he or she would like to participate in the study. If the educator expressed a desire to participate in the study, he or she was asked to fill in the questionnaire package. If any questions needed to be clarified, the participants were encouraged to contact me in order to clarify the directions. The majority of participants did not ask for any clarification of questions. A small number of teachers contacted me to clarify a couple of the questions. Two teachers had me read their responses to the questions to see if they had addressed the questions correctly. In all the cases I was able to address the questions and the participants responded with valuable and usable data.

This methodology proved useful as it maximized the effectiveness of each contact, while limiting the number of formal interviews needed to address questions arising from the research. Through informal contacts the researcher was able to efficiently provide clarification to questions arising from the research package.

Details of Research Package

Biographical Information

Each participant received a detailed personal biographical form. (see Appendix A.) The information provided a biographical sketch of the

participant including the number of years he or she had taught, the subject areas, biological age, sex, and other pertinent information that was applicable for this research project and the development of questions for future research.

Professional Career Questionnaire

Participants were given a series of questions which were intended to lead them to examine their careers in terms of identifying and articulating how they established purpose. The questions assumed that educators have a purpose for what they are doing and that this purpose can be identified by each participant. The questions also attempted to discover if teachers made an attachment to specific incidents in their lives that, when combined together, provided an understanding and defined their purpose for pursuing, establishing, and developing a teaching career. Questions included: When did you first think about pursuing the teaching profession? Can you think of some circumstances that directed you into this profession? Was teaching your first choice for a profession after you left high school? Why have you stayed in teaching? Each question attempted to draw participants into a context to examine how they derive, or have derived, a reason for teaching. The reasons they provided would provide a view of how they addressed purpose in their teaching careers.

Anecdotal Writing and Collaborative Interviews

Participants were asked to write two short narrative anecdotes, using their own words, which described two independent incidents that they had experienced during their duties as teachers.

The first story was to center on an incident in their teaching profession or life which helped them to confirm a personal reason for being a teacher. If there were many incidents the teachers were asked to choose the one which was the most meaningful to them. They were then asked to consider their story about how the incident helped them to confirm their personal reason for staying in the profession as a teacher.

The second story attempted to isolate any factors from which doubt might have entered their minds to whether they should teach or not. The question asked them to "Write about a time in which you faced doubt to whether you wanted to continue teaching?"

My premise was that, during times of doubt, professionals often begin to reevaluate themselves in the context of their profession and attempt to find, or reestablish, a reason for what they are doing. Establishing such a purpose often requires a reflection on past experiences in order to isolate moments in which the professional remained stable, comfortable, and secure about the purpose for being in the profession.

The nature of this question was to extract from teachers what they experienced, how they dealt with these circumstances, and what they found to be some of the reasons for remaining in the teaching profession. The question was designed to extract data and also open avenues for educators to consider lived-experiences centered on establishing a purpose for teaching.

Collaborative Interview

Each participant was asked to meet with me for a collaborative interview. (see delimitations in terms of collaborative group work).

At this meeting each participant was asked to read, or verbally retell, their anecdote. During the interview the participant was asked to review areas which needed more elaboration, or in which another interesting theme emerged. After the initial interview, I asked all teachers to rewrite their stories, including any clarification and or other details that wanted to include which came out of our interview. This final draft was then handed back to the researcher. Once an agreement was made between the participant and the researcher about the accuracy of the story, the material then became one of the components of the research data.

Post-Reflection

Part IV of the research data material package consisted of a series of questions which was intended to provide a basis for teachers to interact with the process of professional reflection they had engaged in.

The questions were used to extract from the teachers further themes that may have come to their minds as they interacted with the first set of questions and their stories. The reflective nature of the questions also allowed teachers a change of voice from telling a story to addressing others more directly about the implications of such questions. The nature of the questions provided teachers an opportunity to share insights that they had obtained from previous experiences and also from the research project (see purpose of study).

These reflections also provided another basis for data as they include many insightful stories told in relation to previous recorded stories. The stories provided a basis for further elaboration and a better understanding of the nature of purpose in teaching. Participants were asked to address the questions: "Is a sense of purpose important in teaching? And, if so, why?" The information gained from answering the above two questions was, in a sense, their perspective of the stories underneath their stories.

Questions in Part IV also included: "Do you feel that identifying purpose in teaching has helped you in your career? If it has helped you, how? If identifying purpose is not that important, state why you think so."

These questions focused on the process of reflecting about establishing purpose in teaching. The nature of the second question allowed teachers to use their insights to help those teachers who will pursue a similar professional career. The final questions asked: "What advice would you give a beginning teacher in establishing a consciousness of belonging to the profession. Do you feel establishing a consciousness of belonging to the profession is important?" These questions allowed teachers to reflect on their development, while also providing an opportunity in the professional development of other educators. The final written copy became another source of data for the research project.

Data Organization

After the data was verified through a collaborative process to ensure accuracy, the data was organized into various themes which emerged from the various anecdotes and questionnaires which were answered by each of the participants. These themes were supported by historical, philosophical, and theoretical writings of educators in the field.

CHAPTER VI

DELIMITATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

DELIMITATIONS

Geographic Considerations

The study was delimited in terms of geographic location. The study was delimited the to the geographic area including and surrounding the city of Edmonton. This delimitation was imposed on the study in order to maximize the effectiveness of the collaborative nature of such a study. It was important for the researcher to have contact with each participant in the study. The delimitation of geography addressed the concerns of the researcher in this area of concern.

The geographical delimitation affects the generalizability of the research findings in terms of reflecting the experiences of all teachers in the Edmonton region. However, the findings do reflect the lived-experiences of the educators who participated in the research study. Given the nature of the study the material will pattern, in many ways, the lived-experiences of educators both inside and outside the Edmonton area.

The study was delimited in terms of a specific location within the Edmonton region. The majority of participants worked at a private accredited, Junior High-Elementary school in Edmonton. The delimitation provided the researcher with access to the teaching environment in which the teachers worked and allowed teachers to verbalize their stories within the context of their actual lived-experiences. This freedom allowed the researcher to maximize each meeting with participants keeping in mind the time constraints imposed by the daily responsibilities of teaching professionals.

Research Sample Considerations

The study was delimited in terms of research sample. Six full-time teachers participated in the research project. They varied in chronological age, sex, and teaching experience. The teachers represented a number of grade levels, spanning grades one to grade nine. Though a greater number of participants might have provided a larger data base to draw on, this delimitation was imposed upon the study because of the availability of each participant in terms of time, both within and outside the school setting.

The smaller sample also made the data manageable given the multiple elements of the research package. The size of the group also allowed for the careful observation of interaction between, and with, each participant. The smaller sample provided numerous opportunities to discuss teaching experiences and articulate specific insights relating to the research project.

The nature (research methodology) of such a study demands a lot of time from busy professionals. In order to have teachers participate in this study it was important to delimit the amount of time required to engage in a narrative study. I found that delimiting the size of the group involved in the study and limiting the time frame of the study provided the maximum efficiency of time allotted for such a study.

Finally, there was limit on time imposed on the researcher as the researcher was also involved in educational responsibilities.

Time Frame of Study

The study was conducted during the third recording period of the year which took place between January 1, 1993, to March 31, 1993. This delimitation helped make the study manageable, mandating a shortened version of a collaborative, biographical, narrative, methodological research design. However, it is impossible to tell how doing the study during this time period might have affected results. For example, in a harsh winter climate like Edmonton, it might be assumed that the end of the winter might be more stressful than the beginning. The study was constructed in such a way as to maximize the validity of such a study even in the context of a time restriction.

Logistics

In order to maximize and facilitate logistics, the modification of the biographical-collaborative-study included over-the-phone interviews with some participants as well as informal note taking after casual conversations with participants. The organization of logistics allowed the participants to use their time more efficiently.(For a detailed breakdown of procedures, see the section "methodology.")

By not meeting in larger groups the researcher was able maximize the interview time for each individual. Though this limited the collaborative affect in terms of a narrative-collaborative research methodology, such collaboration was only limited in certain areas of the research (ie. narrative stories Part II). Collaboration occurred between the researcher and the participant.

LIMITATIONS

The major limitations of the study are effected by the delimitations that must be placed on such a study.

Numbers

In terms of time there is a limitation in that a larger sampling may be able to bring out some attributes of the call that a smaller number may not be able to demonstrate.

Selection

One of the greatest limitations imposed by the delimitations is that the selection of teachers was made because of availability. The study recognized the time restrictions placed upon educators engaged in their professions. I attempted to keep the number of participants small and to include only those teachers with whom I had personal and daily contact. This choice enabled me to understand the teacher in the context of his or her school and allowed the time necessary to work through a collaborative effort in order to accumulate and organize data reflecting the teacher's lived-experiences as told in narrative records.

CONCERNS RELATING TO VALIDITY

Every attempt was made to ensure accuracy and reliability of the material before it was presented as data. Each narrative, biographical, and questionaire record was verified by a collaborative effort between the participants and myself. The research participants were asked to clarify any areas in their questionnaires and or narrative responses that were not self-explanatory. Upon mutual agreement that the material accurately represented the participants personal record, the material then became data for this research project.

Observational notes that were initiated during formal conversations (planned meetings to discuss the research project) and informal conversations (material that was relevant to the study that came as a result of casual staff-room observations) were also carefully screened for accuracy. The screening was also collaborative in design. Individuals were asked to verify the accuracy of the observations that were made in the notes.

CONCERNS RELATING TO TRIANGULATION

I addressed the issue of triangulation by addressing the research question from a number of different perspectives. The research used four different observational perspectives: (1) biographical data collection; (2) pre-questionnaire data; (3) personal narrative data; and (4) reflective questionnaire data. The nature of the questionnaire package enabled me to address the question from a number of different perspectives.

Triangulation was also ensured by the use of observational notes taken from formal personal interviews and observational notes which were take during informal conversations both with staff members and with educators outside the environment of the school.

CONCERNS RELATING TO GENERALIZABILITY

The following research project is an accurate reflection of the beliefs, interpretations, reflections, and insights of the teachers who were involved in the study. I recognize that other themes might have emerged if the research had been conducted using a broader and larger sampling of teachers in the field; however, I believe that the data reflects the general experiences of many educators in the field.

SECTION TWO: RESEARCH THEMES

RESEARCH NARRATIVES

The following narrative expressions are the compilation of teachers' stories which address the question: What is the essence of being called to teaching? The stories encompass a wide range of experiences and understandings associated with the nature of pedagogical praxis. Each story is personal and unique. The stories reflect the nature of teaching as expressed in the words of teachers involved in the study.

Each chapter represents a group of narratives which encompass a specific theme. It is important to note that the historical, and philosophical themes found in chapter two of the study were changed to reflect the findings of the research. The term vocation was used in chapter two to embrace the concept of professional. While this understanding of the term is accurate it seemed to be confusing because vocation can be understood in a broader sense as "a call." Since the entire research focused on the call it was important to find a term that was not so general in order to avoid confusion. While vocation encompassed all the metaphors, technician reflected an integral component of the teaching profession. The Metaphor of Technician was chosen as a more accurate title. The research findings thus use the term technician to embrace the notion of the technical and other professional aspects of the teaching profession.

It should also be noted that the title of Metaphor of Humanitarian in chapter two also proved to be too broad of a term for reflecting the findings of the research. In section two of the research, Metaphor of Humanitarian was divided into two separate chapters: The Metaphor of Faith, and the Metaphor of Humanitarian. The Metaphor of Faith embraced a specific element of humanitarianism expressed by the teachers through their lived-faith-experiences as related to the establishment of purpose in their teaching. Therefore, it was more accurate to deal with each of these aspects of humanitarianism as separate chapters.

The format is organized into three separate narratives: Personal Narratives; Educational Narratives; and Teacher Narratives. The following is an overview of how each chapter is organized.

TITLE

The title presents the metaphor under discussion in the paper. The metaphors have been drawn from both the definition of the term called and also themes that arose from the context of the study.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Personal Narratives are stories that come from my own life-experiences. The narrative expressions focus on the topic (metaphor) of the chapter and highlight a teachable moment in the pedagogical life-experiences of the researcher as a teacher. Each contribution is, itself, based on my personal process of reflecting on the nature of call, as was suggested in chapter "Coming To The Question."

EDUCATIONAL NARRATIVES

Educational Narratives use specific quotes that are historical, philosophical, and theological in content. The quotes address various educational themes which relate to the metaphor expressed in the chapter. The educational narratives are provided as another comparison of expression.

TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

Teachers' Narratives are organized as stories told by teachers in the study. Because the teacher's voices are the central source of knowledge they are purposely placed in bold face print. Various themes are highlighted which support and address the metaphors.

REFLECTIONS

Reflective comments are made at the end of each chapter. The reflection attempts to address a number of questions which arise from the research. The writing is also transitional in nature. Chapters should not be alienated and interpreted in isolation from the remaining chapters, but seen as a piece of the larger group of narratives.

CHAPTER VII

THE METAPHOR OF PARENT

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

...she looked at me, her dark-glinting eyes searching for meaning from my expression....Staring, groping, declaring her need, I missed the moment, missed the timing. She slumped her head over on the kitchen table, covering her identity with her arms, while her tiny body absorbed the betrayal by sobbing. The card lay on the table between us. It was the culprit. It had created the barrier. It had violated a relationship of trust. It had failed to provide the clear picture. I would now have to find a new path to journey into the unknown world of reestablishing trust. Time was suspended for a moment. In that moment I was as helpless as the child I sought to comfort. In that moment I had become a child once again. In that fleeting moment I had discovered the child.

My grade four daughter had come home from school. She had not said very much but had placed a pile of papers of school work on the kitchen table. I was sitting at the table reading the paper. I looked up, and noticed that amidst the pile of debris was her report card. I looked at her, asking if it was O.K for me to look at her report card. She smiled and contributed by stating it was O.K. As I glanced at the card my attention was drawn to a number of the teacher's comments. It was not that the comments were negative; but, I mused at the wording that was used. The statements were foreign to me. The child in this report card was not the child I thought I knew. I read one of the statements in the card, *"her assignments do not meet up with my expectations of the child... we will have to look at study habits perhaps."*

I found this odd for my child loves to read. Hers is a world of discovery, of fun, of adventure. Study is part of our family climate. I looked at the comments with stern defiance. The daughter on this paper was not someone I knew.
As I concentrated on this report I failed to realize, until after my error, that my daughter was intently watching me facial expressions as I viewed her report card. My thoughts at the moment were reflected on the teacher, what she meant by her comments, and how they applied to my realities. The child on the card was foreign to me. I was puzzled.

My child read my facial expressions and determined that my response was negative. She broke down and cried because she had somehow understood my actions to confirm the teachers concerns of her not doing as well as she thought she was doing. What was the outcome?

I looked at my daughter wondering what I had done, rather, than what I had not done? I was caught unguarded.

. . .

In the proceeding weeks my daughter's work improved, and then came her next report card. I had an expectancy that things would be different in this report card. My daughter did also. My daughter proclaimed, "I think I did pretty good because I am doing good in school". As we unfolded the card together, it unfolded with a new dimension of beauty. My daughters first reaction was "yes!" In that moment of excitement, I discovered my daughter once again. Her teacher wrote,

[She] (my daughter's name) has been a real trooper this term and I am very pleased with her improved effort and achievement. [She] has much to offer in terms of ability and has the potential to be a role model to her peers. Good progress!

The card seemed to suggest that my daughter had not merely improved academically, but, perhaps , in that last reporting period, her teacher had moved from the distance of unfamiliarity and ventured into the world of my daughter. My daughter reaffirmed my conclusions. She had discovered her teacher, and her teacher had discovered the child.

...she looked at me, her dark-glinting eyes searching for meaning from my expression....Staring, groping, declaring her need, I captured the moment. The timing was perfect. She raised her head, holding her card over her head declaring the warriors cry of victory, "YES". The card was laid on the table between us. It was no longer a culprit. It had once created the barrier but had now been transformed to being a bridge. It indicated a more accurate picture of the child it wished to sketch. The writing portrayed a development of trust.

. . .

In that moment I was as happy as the child I sought to understand. In that moment I had discovered the child, and we stood together, hand in hand. Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

EDUCATIONAL NARRATIVES

What person worthy of being called by the name, or of sustaining the sacred relation of a parent, would not give any thing, bear anything, sacrifice anything, to have his children, during eight or ten years of the period of their childhood, surrounded by circumstances and breathed upon by sweet and humanizing influences like these!....(Ryerson, p. 165-169, 1847)

I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the Teacher"s bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of <u>duty first, and then affection</u> on the part of the Teacher--of affection first, and then duty on the part of the scholar. The Teacher"s manner was better than <u>parental</u>, for it had a <u>parent's</u> tenderness and vigilance, without the foolish doatings or

indulgences, to which parental affection is prone. (Ryerson, p. 165-169, 1847)

"I have said that I saw no Teacher sitting in his School. Aged or young, all stood. Nor did they stand apart and aloof in sullen dignity. They mingled with their pupils, passing rapidly from one side of the class to the other, animating, encouraging, sympathizing, breathing life into less active natures, assuring the timid, distributing encouragement and endearment to all. (Ryerson, p.165-169, 1847)

When a difficult question has been put to a young child, which tasks all his energies, the Teacher approaches him with a mingled look of concern and encouragement; he stands before him, the light and shade of hope and fear alternately crossing his countenance; and if the little wrestler which difficulty triumphs, the Teacher felicitates him upon his success; perhaps seizes, and shakes him by the hand in token of congratulation; and when the difficulty has been really formidable, and the effort triumphant, I have seen the Teacher catch up the child in his arms, and embrace him, as though he were not able to contain his joy...(Ryerson, p.165-169, 1847)

From Ryerson's writing we can extract the keen understanding that teaching can be understood in the context of parenting. The description he portrays here is the delicate balance that exists between the teacher being a purveyor of knowledge -- the scholar, and that of the parental role -- encourager, guide, and mentor. The call can thus be understood in the metaphor of parent. To experience the call in terms of the parent the pedagogue experiences the essence of responding to the call of the child. Teachers teach because they are animated by the pupils they teach.

TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

The Role of Parent

As teachers we realize the nature of our position in society. We are, by nature, in contact with children almost every day of our lives. Children surround us. They are an integral part of our lives. The call of the child is experienced in responding to a moment in the life-experiences of the child.

Maryanne's Narrative: Being Drawn to the Child

The call of the child is to be drawn toward the child in a act of observance and care. The child animates us. The child establishes a purpose for wanting to engage in teaching. Without being drawn by the child, the act of teaching is futile and in vain.

Maryanne states that the she was drawn toward children at a very young age.

I enjoyed helping children younger than myself. I assisted a teacher in Sunday School. I also was a teacher assistant and teacher in

summer programs at churches. Those experiences in junior high were confirming of my desire to teach.

Maryanne expresses the relationship well when she states, "I enjoyed helping children..." As Ryerson points out, a special relationship occurs between the true pedagogue and the student. It is a moment of mutual trust and learning. It is sharing in a moment of discovery. The essence of the call in teaching is responding to the call of the child. It is expressed in the enjoyment of being engaged in learning and instruction with them.

Maryanne also expresses a concern for parenting her own children. The relationship of the true pedagogue associates teaching with other lived-experiences. In this case the model of teacher is connected to the responsibility of parent.

I taught school prior to being a mother. While my children were babies to 10 years old (the youngest) and 14 years old. I was at home teaching and parenting my children the very important life skills.

Maryanne points out that she was at home teaching and parenting my children the very important life skills. Her parenting role is not divorced from the purpose she derives in teaching. Teaching was central to the parenting role. Maryanne now translate her parental role into her classroom experiences.

It is <u>fulfilling</u> to help children/students learn and develop new skills. Each day is challenging and exciting to relate to students--guiding and building their lives socially, educationally, emotionally,and spiritually.

Purpose is established in the role of helper to children. Each day is seen as a challenge, and it is exciting. Children are envisioned in terms of their social development, educational development, emotional development, and finally, but not least, spiritual development. The call establishes the entire child before the pedagogue, and not merely a concern with only one aspect of the person. It is the nature of the parent to be acquainted and concerned with the entire child.

The teacher is moved and challenged to relate to the entire spectrum of the individual student in terms of development and given direction. Maryanne cares for her students. They are, in a sense, her children -- her responsibility. Her care and commitment to them is both obvious in her narratives, but also in observation made within the context of the school. The call in Maryanne's life is in essence a call of response to the need of children.

Nicole's Narrative: Responding to Children's Needs

Nicole's narrative demonstrates the commonalty of experiences that awaits the true pedagogue. The teacher in her story was driven by the call of needs of a young student to make a difference. The need to reach out to the student in need characterizes the essence of the call in teaching. The call requires compassion that moves teachers to the needs of their students. It is found in the essence of caring for our students. It is found in hurting with them as a natural response to

children. At times our social commitments and social restraints cannot allow us to react, but the teacher is nevertheless moved toward the need of the student.

Nicole faces such a dilemma in her teaching career. There is a risk involved in her scenario, yet she is moved in response to the call of the child. Nicole discovers the child, not as an object to be observed from a distance but as a young person in need of nurture, help, and support. By moving closer to her student she is invited by the child to participate in a moment of personal experience. The call motives the teacher to come back to the child. It is experienced in care. It is experienced in trying or being driven to make a difference.

> **My first year of teaching I taught a girl that was living in an abusive home. I was the only consistent person in her life who cared about her emotional, spiritual, and educational growth. She was a good student once she gained confidence...Both of her parents were alcoholics, and her house was a haven for drunks off the street.**
>
> . . .
>
> **I enjoy seeing my students learn. I think in ways I am very selfish because I find it more rewarding than they do when they learn and have fun doing so I get a feeling of satisfaction.**

In her second observation, Nicole is animated by experiencing the moments of learning with her students. To be isolated from the satisfaction of relating and responding to the child is to fail to establish the essence of being called in teaching. Children must be central in deriving purpose in Nicole's teaching.

Rob's Narrative: Role Modeling

Rob is called toward the child in a moment of dealing with student misbehavior.

> **The extra effort often required pays some great dividends. This was brought home to me in dealing with a number of students, but one in particular comes to mind. I had been told of a student who had cheated on one of my exams. When approached the student admitted to the cheating. Instead of failing the student, I disallowed his answers to the part of the exam he had used the cheat sheet for. He still barely passed the exam. I showed him and told him he was smarter than he thought and that he needed confidence in himself. I never had a problem after that and his work improved.**

In his response Rob took time to find out the root problem of the learning and not the merely acting out as obviously evident in the cheating. The words, "I showed him," indicates the special relationship teachers have with their students. It matters that children know there is someone who cares for them. The parental aspect is one of nurturing, caring, and correction. The call is driven by a motivation to see the entire child and not merely a consciousness of an object in which dissemination of "knowledge" takes place.

In his second narrative, Rob demonstrates the parental role of model, friend, and mentor. Rob is driven by the hope of making a difference.

> **By showing him I was human, capable of forgiveness and trust. I inspired him to excel.(I think). The reward for me was that everyone wins in this instant and that I think I helped to influence him in a positive way. Hopefully, he will remember. If not it doesn't matter. What matters is that I was able to make a difference, however small, to one student. Hopefully it will last.**

> **Just the opposite of story one. I put in extra time, effort, resolving to turn a student around. While it helped in some respects he did not show much improvement. In fact he should have failed in one course by a few percentage points. The administrator passed him anyway.**

It is interesting that today we are seeing a cry for back to the basics. Many describe a teacher as the enforcer, the one who presented facts and figures. Each student was required to study. The image is cold, calculating. The teacher appears far and distant in such an image. Yet, this image is far from the experience of the teacher. It is also far from the experience of the call. Rob cares for his students, that is evident. There is a special relationship that develops which is built on mutual trust. It is a relationship built on closeness. Notice that Rob sees the administrator's action as being distant from the relationship he has built with this student. Teachers associate their purpose with developing pedagogical relationships with their students. These special relationships are not always positive, yet the teacher is driven by knowing that the outcome will help and shape the student for the future.

Jim's Narrative: Establishing a Love for Children

Jim expresses his love for children and is driven to respond to children. It is not odd to see Jim playfully communicating with young children in the hallway. Their love and trust for Jim is quite evident.

> **The keys to being a teacher are that you have to want to do it. You have to love the children, and you have to know what you want in the classroom and stick with it, be it in curriculum or management. I feel this combination will give enjoyment, <u>meaning and success</u> in being a teacher and will be make the <u>career a rewarding one</u>.**

> **If I did not love the students my work would have no meaning. Without love, all the work I would do for my students would be meaningless. <u>Imparting knowledge</u> in itself has no meaning to me.**

Jim establishes purpose in his devotion and response to children. As Jim states, "imparting knowledge in itself has no meaning to me." Jim's calling is responding to the children around him.

Susan's Narrative: The Need of Good Communication

Susan identifies characteristics in her life that are identified with being a good communicator. During her years at university, Susan did a lot of tutoring. She was drawn to the needs of children. She was drawn to those special moments, "I like to see the sparkle in their eyes when they understand something. We both feel a sense of accomplishment."

> People telling me I have lots of patience and I communicate concepts clearly. I did a lot of tutoring while going to university, I got a lot of encouragement from the success of those students.
>
> Tutoring has made me realize I enjoy working with and helping kids (grades 7-12). I like to see the sparkle in their eyes when they understand something. We both feel a sense of accomplishment.

Michelle's Narrative: The Love of Interaction with Children

Michelle's narrative shows that, once again there is a love relationship of interacting with children. To be a teacher divorced by distance of indifference is to struggle in the essence of the call. The call must be understood in the context of responding to the child as parent. When asked to address why she remains in teaching, Michelle answered:

> I LOVE IT! I like learning about the subjects I am teaching. I love the kids and interacting with them, and the fact that there's never a dull moment.

Perhaps one of the greatest tests for the teacher does not come in moments of joy in which the teacher is drawn to the student, but in moments of doubt when conflict arises out of our interaction with students as teachers. Oddly enough, given the desire of teachers to respond to the needs of children, the most common source of conflict and later doubt came as a result of misunderstandings with the parents of students.

Conflicting Roles

Nicole's Narrative: Doing What is Right!

> I had gone upstairs to get the grade 4 class for art. I was lining them up to take them for art. While doing so the class across the hall was out of control. They were hitting people, and standing on desks. I asked the Grade 4's to wait silently. I went across the hall and bawled out the grade 6 class. There was no teacher in the room. I had taught this group the previous year. I let them know that I was disappointed in their behavior etc.
>
> That night I called three parents in that class to let them know what had happened. The first two parents were responsive and thankful that

I had let them know. The third parent was a much different story, however. She told me she felt I was at fault and had no right in reprimanding the class. She had called each one of the grade 6 students personally asking if I had been fair, or was I ganging up on them. She told me that I was unprofessional and should orally go apologize to the class for hurting their feelings. She let it be known that I had better watch it since her husband was a "board member.

I received a nasty letter from another parent (the lady's best friend) I informed both the principal and chairman of the board, about the situation. He told them they [the two abusive parents] were to apologize to me. They never did, however. After that they were sickly sweet. It really upset me that they felt they could use their position to bully a person around.

Teachers indicated in conversations with me that they are often faced with times in their lives when their parental role runs in conflict with others responsible in parental roles. It is then that teachers, if shaken by the experience, are moved to doubt their purpose in teaching. While many teachers respond to the incident well, many are left bewildered and eventually gun shy of such occasions. Teachers must have a strong sense of commitment and purpose to the work they are doing, for teaching has its delightful moments, but it also has many moments of stress.

When there is a conflict of responsibility of roles, teachers are often drawn to reflect upon their motives for their actions. I am not suggesting that teacher's motives are never incorrect or misplaced, but once again teachers are called upon to test their knowledge of their commitment to children and, in Nicole's case, a parental role even toward the parents themselves. Her response was based in part by her religious faith, but also in terms of being motivated to see justice and equity performed. Nicole states, regarding the incident surrounding parental responsibility:

I felt I needed to stand up for righteousness sake. That God doesn't want us to back down when we are in the right. If I let them get away with it (both the class and parents) I was only allowing them to hurt themselves.

Nicole's insights are supported by Ryerson's writings in which he draws attention to the parental role of the teacher. Ryerson points out that the teacher has a special role as parent. He calls a teacher's manner "better than parental." The teacher is removed, in Ryerson's opinion, "[from] the foolish doatings or indulgences, to which parental affection is prone." (Ryerson, p. 165, 1847)

Ryerson states:

I never saw a blow struck, I never heard a sharp rebuke given, I never saw a child in tears, nor arraigned at the Teacher's bar for any alleged misconduct. On the contrary, the relation seemed to be one of <u>duty first, and then affection</u> , on the part of the Teacher--of affection first, and then duty on the part of the scholar. The

> Teacher's manner was better than parental, for it had a **parent's** tenderness and vigilance, without the foolish doatings or indulgences, to which parental affection is prone. (Ryerson, p. 165, 1847)

I believe these narratives reveal a lot about how teachers view their students. Teachers see themselves in terms of a special role. They act, in part, as parent, even though the are not the biological or legal parent. In some cases parental roles conflict. It might well be the reason for Michelle's comment found in the following narrative.

Michelle's Narrative: Being Misunderstood

> **I doubted my profession more in the early years. I wanted to quit when a parent accused me of verbally abusing (scaring), her son, which was unfounded. I have found that parents create the most "doubts" for me -- not my students.**

This teacher is motivated and defensive for her own students as a parent is for theirs. Often misunderstandings can occur.

Rob's Narrative: The Aspect of Trust

Rob points out an interesting metaphor in terms of dealing with this aspect of ownership. The context of this statement is when administration overrules the instruction and/ or actions of teachers with one of their students.

> **Teachers like parents hate having their instruction undermined. Because of special trust, special view of the child.**

The call to teaching is understood as a "special trust" that develops between pedagogue and pupil. Teachers seek these moments in which they enter into the world of the child, in which they bridge the gap of need.

REFLECTIONS

The metaphor of parent expresses the idea that teachers are called to respond to children. The essence of the call in teaching addresses the nature of establishing a purpose as a result of responding to the call of the child. To be successful the teacher must love being with and working with children. Responding to the call of the child must be central to understanding why we want to teach.

The metaphor of parent embraces the need of the teacher to develop pedagogical relationships with their students. The relationships include love, caring, nurturing, and correction. At times a teacher's desire to meet the needs of students will conflict with parental interests. At these times, teachers must consider their purpose for teaching. The metaphor of parent is an integral component of the essence of the call in teaching.

CHAPTER VIII

THE METAPHOR OF TECHNICIAN

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

Ken was a master of his notorious hip-check. Each hockey game Ken would demonstrate his technical expertise by initiating another unwilling student into the wonderful sensation of flight; followed by his own patented lesson on centrifugal force; and the imposition of gravity, ending when a movable force met the unmovable force. Bewildered and stunned the student sat in awe of the majesty of the technique. Thus concluded his lesson for the moment.

Almost every practice I fell victim to his technical expertise. I would stick-handle toward him visualizing my strategy of escape, waiting for his eyes to drop anticipating a fleeting moment of freedom between my opponent and the net he was guarding. Each time he would tease me with his seeming hesitation and overcommitment to move the wrong way. In my moment of arrogance I would initiate a final kick of speed, only to realize I had jumped into his trap once again.

My hope shattered into reality as I sailed upside-down landing on my back wondering how he had done it again. His robust laughter greeted my landing. It seemed to mock, "O Ye Rookie of Little Faith, know ye not man who flies over other man must eventually land?" He would extend his arm in an effort to pick up me up and then using his hockey stick he would swat the seat of my hockey equipment with sending a resounding crack echoing through the rink. It was his way of saying, You belong to the world of the vanquished. Don't be ashamed, others have befallen your fate. Others have embraced the sensation of flight in order to be numbered on the notches of my hockey stick.

"Teach me," I called one day. "Teach me to make others fly." And so he became my mentor. He stayed after practice to demonstrate the refinement and mastery of the trade. I followed each step carefully. He was the master technician.

I watched, I followed. I replicated. I failed. I repeated. I practiced. Finally, I initiated. I improvised. I took ownership. HE TESTED.

What an odd partnership, I the willing student; he the willing teacher waiting with anticipation for my success. Oddly, my success would be his success. His success being measured in that moment when he would somersault through the air landing on his back, winded, and confused, but, exhilarated in the accomplishment of sharing his gift.

> This is the essence of being a technician. It is a shared moment of purpose derived from being good at what one does. It is a moment of being able to share in learning. It is the nature of being a pedagogue. (thank-you Ken)

EDUCATIONAL NARRATIVES

> I think it is true in the business of teaching, as well as in every other department of human industry, that where there is a suitable division of labour, each laborer is more likely to become more master of his work, and imbued with the spirit of it, than where his time and attention and energies are divided among a nameless variety of objects; and as the example of England may be appeal to proof the miracles which may be performed in regard both to the amount and qualities of manufactures, by a skillful division and application of labour, so may the examples of other countries of Europe be adduced in illustration of what may be achieved as to both the cheapness, the thoroughness, the various practical character, and the general diffusion of education, by a proper classification of Schools and Teachers, their appropriate training and selection by competition, together with an efficient system of inspection over every class of Schools,--the latter being the chief instrument of the wonderful improvement and success in the Holland system of Public Instruction [In regards to teacher training]. (Ryerson, p. 155, 1847)

TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

The Rewards of Teaching

While we may want to attach the call to some noble ideal of teaching, it is important to understand that the essence of the call in teaching is derived from the combination of many different lived-experiences in which the teacher finds a source of motivation. Each narrative becomes another source of describing the nature of the being called to teaching.

Many educators are drawn into the profession because they find specific benefits attached to the vocation as rewarding. The rewards can be extrinsic, such as meeting various needs appropriately attached to working conditions and renumeration. There are also numerous benefits that are attached to the profession, such as extended holidays, social status, and favorable working conditions.

The rewards can also be attached to instrinsic motivations in which teachers find meaningful experiences that act as motivating forces and encourage teachers to stay in the profession. The experiences can be rare; however, many teachers demonstrated that those moments made teaching worthwhile. Anticipating the moment in some cases provided a sense of reward and established purpose in the career.

Susan's Narrative: Choosing a Career with Options

When asked whether teaching was her first career choice and why she stayed with the profession, Susan replied:

> I didn't know of other careers...I felt it would be the most versatile career for the mission field. I'm not financially stable to pursue another career. I like the summers off.

Susan's remarks must be understood in the context of her entire narrative which expresses a deep desire to work with children and find mutual rewards in shared pedagogical moments.

Susan demonstrates that it was her lack of knowledge of career options that impacted her decision to begin teaching. Second, teaching was seen as a "versatile career," and a way of preparing her for a future change in careers. Versatile related to the fact that teaching develops a number of specific skills that are transferable to other professional or technical-based careers. The benefits of the vocation provides a reward that motivates Susan in her teaching career. When compared to other professions offering less vacation time, Susan finds the teaching profession inviting and beneficial in meeting her need.

Jim's Narrative: Financial Rewards

> I plan on going into [another career] in the future, so my reasons for teaching is also as "in between" career, (to raise money and gain experience)

Jim provides a reason for teaching which is attached to financial reward. Jim's plans are to use his teaching profession as a training ground to prepare him for another field of interest. His field is not mentioned here, but in conversations with Jim the field is associated with teaching. Jim points to that teaching provides a basis for meeting financial commitments and also to gain valuable experience in preparation for his future career choices. Purpose is thus established by seeing his teaching career as a stepping stone to a field he desires to pursue.

Michelle's Narrative: The Reward of Feeling Special

In Michelle's narrative, she shares that her vocation provided many opportunities of reward. It provided a time in her life in which she felt "special."

> One of the most meaningful [moments] was when I was teaching L.A. 7-9 in "small town" Saskatchewan. Five of my students took me out for supper for my birthday. They made it an "anonymous" invitation, so I didn't really know what was happening. One of the dads came to my home to pick me up to take me for supper at a nice restaurant while they were waiting for me. What an honor!
>
> I felt that I had made an impact on their lives and that for every negative experience I had teaching, this positive experience more than erased that!

This was one out of many events which established purpose in Michelle's' teaching career. Purpose is derived from many different aspects of the career, both within the confines of the classroom and into our daily lives. The call is often balanced with events that both please us and hurt us. Articulating a moment of feeling "special" provides a basis to face the hard times found in the career.

. . .

As was suggested before, many different events in teachers' lives establish purpose in the teaching profession. The following narratives focus on the importance of establishing purpose in the teaching profession. The narratives reveal the nature of how purpose is derived. The combination of narratives demonstrate that the call is personal, unique, and encompasses a lifetime of pedagogical moments. The findings suggest that the call is never static. It changes with the teacher's personal experiences and the development of the teacher within the profession in terms of skills development and pedagogical awareness.

The call is also understood by teachers in terms of a combination of practice and belief. The call is never expressed solely in terms of a philosophical ideal. The essence of the call is attached to pedagogical praxis.

Such moments of teaching are drawn from many sources including childhood, early adult experiences, teacher training experiences, and professional experiences within the field. In each case the participant attaches a recognition of pedagogical significance to the moment. That is to say, the moment is given personal significance because it provides a link to the individual's present activities in teaching. It expresses why they teach and expresses how the moment influenced their teaching development. It expresses itself in terms of teaching skills, responses toward children, and ideological understandings of the nature of teaching. When combined with numerous other events these narratives provide a basis for establishing the essence of the call in teaching.

The narratives also demonstrate how purpose is attached to pedagogical moments of success. The success is based on moments in which the individual experienced a sense of professional competence. The development of professional competence provides a sense of security and well-being. It is this sense of well-being that establishes a confidence in the teacher and directs them to respond to the child.

An Affirmation of Skills

In many of the narratives teachers identified a sense of their skills early in life. What was also evident was that the skills were identified before they pursued the teaching profession. It was clear that a desire to teach was not enough to bring them to the profession. Many teachers looked for an affirmation, both in terms of what they perceived to be their abilities and also in terms of skills confirmed by the observations made by other people in regards to their abilities to engage their students in instruction. It is the combination of the three that established a sense of being able to do the work. The teachers often equated earlier teaching experiences as an identification and affirmation of their present abilities to teach.

Nicole's Narrative: An Early Interest in Teaching

Nicole states:

> As a child whenever I was asked what I wanted to be, I always answered, "A teacher." Two things really settled it in my mind. The first was when I was in Grade 10 I signed up to be a "buddy" at a Girl Guide Handicap camp. I was in charge of two girls, one had cerebral Palsy and was totally dependent, the other had mild cerebral Palsy and could function quite well on her own. At the end of the week I knew I wanted to work with special needs children, I went again the next year knowing that someday I would be a special education teacher. The second even was after I graduated I worked in a care home as a assistant activity director. I loved being with the people and organizing activities. Working with the elderly is very similar to the young.

Nicole's Narrative identifies a number of earlier incidents to address why she is a teacher today. Purpose is established in a process of connecting numerous lived-experiences in which we affirm our present abilities, interests, and actions. Establishing our teaching praxis in such a way provides a way to identify our present purpose. The question seems to express not merely why I teach, but who I am as a person. It is Nicole's work with children that spawned an interest in education as a career. There is also a sense balance between a commitment to a cause, demonstrated in a love for being with people, and also a commitment and love for the technical aspects of the profession.

Maryanne's Narrative: Affirmation by Others

Maryanne identifies the same need for affirmation in her career. Maryanne identifies that affirmation was connected to events which occurred early in her life as a young teenager, both by others and then confirmed by one's own actions.
She writes:

> Throughout all my grade school, I wanted to be a teacher.
> I enjoyed helping children younger than myself. I assisted a teacher in Sunday School. I also was a teacher assistant and teacher in summer programs at churches. Those experiences in junior high were confirming of my desire to teach.

In her present teaching role, Maryanne expresses the following insights:

> Observing other teachers in formal and informal teaching situations affirms giftedness. While observing, a teacher becomes aware of his/her abilities. Discussion of situations in a classroom is also very helpful. Discussing "How do you do this?" affirms one's own understanding and capabilities, and builds more confidence by adding the expertise from the other teacher.

Maryanne points out the reflective nature of affirmation. She specifies her personal "interests" and "expectations." Maryanne also points out the desire to build confidence through competency. Maryanne's narrative demonstrates the teacher's desire to affirm abilities in terms of fellow peers. Purpose is therefore established and understood in the context of communicating with other educators.

Susan's Narrative: Continual Need of Affirmation

Susan points to a constant need for confirmation. Confidence is established over the years but her considerations suggest that our motivation for teaching needs to be nurtured in the early, formative years by the encouragement of others and the vocational (professional) maturity of the individual. Given that the skills are manifesting themselves the motivation becomes directed to other areas of experience. Each however is part of the puzzle of the dimensions of the call. When asked why she decided to go into teaching, Susan points out...

> **People [were] telling me I have lots of patience and I communicate concepts clearly. I did a lot of tutoring while going to university, I got a lot of encouragement from the success of those students.**

The affirmation, however, does not merely come form what others tell us, it is connected to our teaching experiences. Purpose cannot be established through a network disconnected from our teaching practice. It is the embodiment of beliefs, affirmations of personal experiences, and the combination of other's observations that culminate in the building and maturing of purpose in the teacher's life. Susan reaffirms this notion of affirmation through a shared sense of accomplishment with students.

> **Tutoring has made me realize I enjoy working with and helping kids (grades 7-12). I like to see the sparkle in their eyes when they understand something. We both feel a sense of accomplishment.**

> **Teachers also pointed out specific skills that were identified with teaching. Some of these skills included being a good listener, being able to communicate clearly, and the ability to enforce discipline.**

In terms of the motivating factors that were expressed the teachers pointed out a love for learning, a love for sharing knowledge, and a love for children.

Finally, it was important for teachers to develop their skills. Purpose was derived from a compulsion to succeed in their abilities to teach. Success was important. Success was experienced as the ability to communicate and engage in meaningful teachable moments with their students. Teachers looked to others to support their careers and looked toward student success as a way of explaining teacher success. Success brought to them a sense of accomplishment. This reinforced their desire to teach.

The Importance of Purpose

Teachers pointed out that reflecting on their purpose for teaching was an integral component in establishing both a reason for entering the profession and a continual motivating factor in establishing a focus within their daily praxis.

Reflecting on their purpose for teaching provided a series of reference points which provided reassurance in times of struggles within their professional careers. Struggles were linked to a variety of circumstances including being overwhelmed by feelings of inadequacy to fulfill the role of teacher; experiencing feelings of technical incompetence which was experienced as a frustration in not being able to meet the educational needs of their students; and, finally, misunderstandings leading to minor or, in some cases, major conflicts with students, staff, parents, or administration. Reflecting about the essence of their call (purpose) provided a basis to build and restore confidence.

Purposeful Reflections

It is interesting to note that the development and source of establishing purpose in teaching was linked to life experiences which occurred well before the teacher entered the teaching profession. In fact, many of the narratives linked childhood experiences to provide a specific meanings to the present. The essence of the call was not isolated to one specific time or place. It was a combination of lived experiences, encompassing a variety of meanings within the individuals' lives.

The research revealed that teachers develop a sense of purpose through reflecting about stories which reveal times in their lives in which they engaged in teaching. By connecting a number of pedagogical moments, teachers reflected about how each moment created both a desire to teach and an affirmation that they had specific skills to teach.

Teachers demonstrated a keen awareness of specific skills needed to fulfill the role of a teacher. The evidence pointed out that teachers referred to the praxis component of their pedagogical relationship and focused a lot of their attention on discovering, identifying, and gaining affirmation in terms of pedagogical readiness and an identification of personal skills associated with producing solid teaching praxis. Teachers associated success in teaching with being solid in the technical aspects of instruction. Success in teaching was also balanced with a desire to pursue learning and share such learning with children.

Susan's Narrative: Reflecting on Purpose

Susan, a second year junior high school teacher, finds reassurance and encouragement in reflecting upon why she teaches. Establishing the essence of the call provides a foundation of assurance for teachers in their careers. Susan's call suggests:

> **I feel this [establishing a call] is important because, when hard times come, you can be sure they will, and you have doubts about whether you have made a major error in your career choice, you can**

find assurance and encouragement in the hope and promise you had at the beginning--knowing that you are where you are supposed to be.

Establishing a call allows Susan a process in which she can articulate and reflect on why she teaches. This reflection provides a confidence in her professional competence. It is built upon an assurance established by her success as a teacher and also the identification of pedagogical success throughout her life.

This process of evaluation draws teachers to examine their reasons for teaching, and asks whether such understandings are substantiated with a clear established view of why they continue to teach. Such an evaluative process ending in the termination of teaching is not a measure of commitment to teaching but an evaluative process which, when balanced and evaluated with the present conditions of their teaching environment, will persuade them with a basis of comparison in which a decision can be made to stay in the profession or move to another profession. In Susan's case she finds it important to have a sense of knowing you "belong."

Jim's Narrative: Establishing a Purpose

When asked if establishing purpose is important to a teacher, Jim, a third year elementary and junior high music school teacher, adds:

> Definitely, without a goal or purpose the job becomes just a job; eat, sleep, plan, teach...etc. It is the viscous circle of life. When you do have a purpose your job becomes more than a job--it gives one a sense of purpose in life.
>
> If I had no purpose I would be "chasing after the wind," in vain.

While Susan expresses that purpose establishes a foundation for reflection, Jim explains it as that which provides a basis for meaning in work. Jim implies that teaching is an embodiment of who he is as a person. It is a way to express who he is and what animates him. Jim states:

> I feel it is a good use of my talents...

Jim also points out another interesting element associated with the notion of vocation. It is experienced in terms of specific skills identified before and during formal training suggesting an interest in the vocation which is commensurate to developing skills recognizable by other people associated with perspective teachers. Notice what Jim states:

> I remember student teaching and getting my evaluation back. My evaluator referred to me as an amazingly gifted teacher and that I would someday be a master teacher. This was an <u>affirmation of my talents</u> and <u>encouraged me to teach</u>.
>
> It was an encouragement of my gifts and motivated me to develop them by becoming a teacher.

The affirmation of skills drives pedagogues to pursue a continual development of their pedagogical skills. Jim's response was, "It was an encouragement of my gifts and motivated me to develop them by becoming a teacher."

Imbedded, and not to be lost, is a recognition that one needs affirmation about whether one is capable of teaching. The growing nature of the vocation must be seen as a continual affirmation of the giftedness of the individual. The call then in terms of vocation can be understood as an affirmation of technical skills and the growing aspect of seeking new skills from those proven in the field.

> **The keys to being a teacher are that you have to want to do it. You have to love the children, and you have to know what you want in the classroom and stick with it, be it in curriculum or management. I feel this combination will give enjoyment, meaning and success in being a teacher and will be make the career a rewarding one.**
>
> **If I did not love the students, my work would have no meaning, without love all the work, I would do for my students would be meaningless. Imparting knowledge in itself has no meaning to me.**

Jim here speaks also of the motivation which moves teachers to engage in teaching. It is not enough to be merely a technician of the trade, but one must possess a love for children. A devotion to students is a central component to the call of teaching. In Jim's understanding, the imparting of knowledge is meaningless unless it is attached to a purpose in the students' lives. There is ownership in the essence of the call. Notice Jim's use of the term my students. Jim's call must be understood with meaning being derived from engaging students in a moment of discovery. The call cannot be divorced from his love for children. The call is attached to his purpose, his purpose established in pedagogical praxis.

Michelle's Narrative: Living the Role of Teacher

> **It is most important that as a teacher, you view yourself as a professional and the person IN CHARGE! It is difficult to step into a role of being the leader after so many years (usually) of not being in control. The students respect you more if you are comfortable with your role as the teacher.**

Michelle's Narrative addresses the essence of the call as established in undertaking the role of the teacher. When the teachers in this study spoke of what brought them to the profession, many spoke in terms of identifying specific characteristics which were commonly understood to be attached to the profession. The essence of the call also encompasses a conscience choice to engage in the role of teacher. Purpose is established by accepting the role that is afforded the pedagogue and, within such a role, being animated by all the elements that comprise the essence of the call in teaching. Accepting the role does not suggest uniformity of intent, purpose, and teacher praxis. The role reflects the nature of teaching, in which the teacher is afforded specific responsibilities and is engaged with specific purposes in mind in relation to their students. Purpose is established when teachers

become sensitive to the role that is afforded them because of their training and skills.

In Michelle's narrative the role is seen in terms of being a leader and an example for the students she is entrusted with. She derives purpose by responding to the role and seeing it as important and with purpose.

Michelle demonstrates a consciousness to the role of teacher. Michelle suggests that students are also conscious of the role of teacher. Purpose is derived from an awareness of this relationship. It is a recognition of being pedagogue. It is a response to vocation.

Maryanne's Narrative: Purpose: The Prime Motivator

Maryanne, an eleven year grade one teacher, calls purpose a "prime motivator." She points to two challenging times in her teaching career in which a clear sense of purpose provided a definitive notion of why she was teaching and also shaped and redefined her notion of the teacher.

> **Purpose in teaching has always been a prime motivator. Even when interacting with the most difficult child, there is fulfillment in seeing small areas of growth and development.**
>
> **When teaching grade 5 my first year, I wondered at times, if I was more a "policewoman" organizing discipline procedures than a teacher teaching. However, with experience I am affirmed in the teaching aspect. Experience has brought techniques for classroom management. Discipline of difficult students is still the greatest challenge.**

Teachers have a sense of what they envision the job of a teacher to be. This perception shapes not merely what we think a teacher should be but, rather, what type of a teacher we want to be and what type of teacher we are. Maryanne envisioned the "teacher teaching." Such a statement suggests teacher's can be engaged in other activities which do not reflect what they perceive as pedagogical in nature. Maryanne's experience encompassed a readjustment of her perception of teacher, developing a strategy to meet this new perception and a renewed view of meeting the challenges of daily teaching praxis. Being aware that changes have to be made is itself expressed in the metaphor of technician. Maryanne's narrative demonstrates that her success in meeting the role of "policewomen" affirmed a desire to stay in the profession.

Maryanne's narrative expresses both a desire to be a good role model for her students and also to be engaged in finding ways in which she can bring to her students the skills needed for their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development. Maryanne seeks to continually develop technical expertise in her work. The technical skills that need to be addressed are constantly being revised as experience provides new avenues of understanding the changing notion of the role of the teacher.

The teacher who is called sees personal skills as something that can be continually improved upon. The call demands our attention to doing our work better. We are driven by a purpose of success which is connected to our ability to perform our duties with upmost commitment and competence. The call is essentially understood here as taking a

responsibility to recognize the need to grow and moving to accomplish such a task. There is an affirmation of building in the teacher. Maryanne states:

> **Observing other teachers in formal and informal teaching situations affirms giftedness. While observing, a teacher becomes aware of his/her abilities. Discussion of situations in a classroom is also very helpful. Discussing "How do you do this?" affirms one's own understanding and capabilities and builds more confidence by adding the expertise from the other teacher.**

Imbedded, and not to be lost, is a recognition that one needs affirmation to whether one is capable of teaching. This affirmation might easily be overlooked. After all, why do we need affirmation to a position we have trained for and are in? The growing nature of the vocation must be seen as a continual affirmation of the giftedness of the individual. The call then, in terms of vocation, can be understood as an affirmation of technical skills and the growing aspect of seeking new skills from those proven in the field.

REFLECTIONS

The essence of the call encompasses each of these narratives. There is a commonalty within many of the experiences of the teachers, yet the diversity and uniqueness of each narrative is also demonstrated. What is common is that teachers find meaning in what they do by reflecting about moments of pedagogical significance. The essence of the call is that urge to find meaning in the activity of pedagogy. It is responding to the nature of teaching which demands a technical expertise, coupled with a desire to meet the needs of our students.

The essence of the call is found in the combination of meaningful lived-experiences attached to our present activity. The call is found in recognizing the responsibilities afforded teachers in our society and responding to carry out the job to the best of our abilities. The call is that expression of caring about the nature of teaching which motivates the teacher to actively improve pedagogical praxis in order to engage in moment of shared learning with our students. It is the essence of being a technician. It is to be driven to know our profession and to do the work well. To be satisfied with anything less is to not understand the nature of being a pedagogue. The call animates us to find the pedagogue in our lives.

CHAPTER IX

THE METAPHOR OF HUMANITARIAN

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

I was giving a report in grade three on my favorite planet in the solar system. I had not been able to find out why there were rings surrounding the planet of Saturn so I decided that I would speculate to why they existed. My answer was quite simple. If the planet's surface was filled with gases, it was only natural that some of the gasses, being lighter than air, would escape and surround the planet. The teacher paused me at the point of my explanation. I waited for a rebuke because I had not been able to find out the causes of the ring. She told the class to be very quiet. Miss Fairwern made me repeat, in her own word, "my imaginative observations." In that moment I discovered the essence of being recognized for a scientific discovery. I had postulated my first theorem. My teacher never let me forget the moment. She reminded me of my success throughout the year. The moment became imprinted in my memory. It held pedagogical significance for both of us. Perhaps, in that moment she envisioned her first budding future theorist.(A theorist who at the time had not yet memorized the planets in the solar system.) It didn't matter, in that moment she inspired me to learn. She had produced an change in my attitude toward learning. She had made a difference.
(Thanks, Miss Fairwern)

EDUCATIONAL NARRATIVES

> By education, I mean not the mere acquisition of certain arts or of certain branches of knowledge, but that instruction and discipline which qualify and dispose the subjects of it for their appropriate duties and employments of life, as Christians, as persons of business, and also as members of the civil community in which they live." (Ryerson, p.9, 1847)

> The basis of an educational structure adapted to this end should be as broad as the population of the country; and its loftiest elevation should equal the highest demands of the learned professions, adapting its gradation of schools to the wants of the several classes of the community, and their respective employments or professions, the one rising above the other--the one conducting to the other; yet each complete in itself for the degree of education it imparts; a character of uniformity as to fundamental principles pervading the whole: the whole based upon the principles of Christianity, and uniting the combined influence and support of the Government and the people. (Ryerson, p.9, 1847)

TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

The essence of the call to teaching can be expressed as a desire to make a difference in the life of a child. The metaphor of

humanitarian suggests that pedagogical success is experienced as a moment in time in which the teacher inspires a child to move toward his or her full potential. The success is often experienced in short moments in which the child and the pedagogue are engaged in a shared moment of learning intent on moving the child toward a present or future goal. Experienced in these moments is a sense that children must be nurtured and encouraged to find their full potential. The essence of the call is often lived in the present moment of learning, but connected by the pedagogue to a hope of seeing children become successful in the future.

The following narratives highlight this hope. The hope of seeing children become successful animates teachers. In the first narrative the teacher is motivated by the progress of the child.

Rob's Narrative: Desiring to Make a Difference

When asked to write a positive experience that provided a basis for some reasons for staying in the profession Rob writes the following narrative. The narrative expresses Rob's desire to inspire his students and to see them as individuals. The essence of the call moves the teacher from seeing his or her pedagogy in terms of a ubiquitous, universal relationship with students. The teacher moves from "the class," to understand and take an interest in the student. Rob describes an incident in which he takes time to help a student who is struggling with his studies. Rob writes:

> By showing him I was human, capable of forgiveness and trust, I inspired him to excel.(I think). The reward for me was that everyone wins in this instant and that I think I helped to influence him in a positive way. Hopefully he will remember, if not it doesn't matter. What matters is that I was able to make a difference, however small, to one student. Hopefully it will last.

In Rob's words, the statement "I hope I made a difference." expresses the desire to direct a child to success. Success is measured in the uncertainty of making a difference. Pedagogues live for the moment of change in their students attitudinal, intellectual, or emotional maturity. Purpose is derived from those times in which the teacher was invited, and sometimes not invited, into the world of the child. Purpose is derived from opportunities to share in pedagogical moments that initiates change.

What does it mean to make a difference? Rob's narrative shares a moment of attitudinal change in the child. For a child willing to change exemplifies an openness to learn, no matter how small the moment as measured in time. Teachers live with a knowledge that they can never know how much of an impact they made, yet they are motivated -- the call is understood in the moments of pedagogical sharing which might become part of the impetus for development and change in future years.

It is odd to be motivated by what is not known. Yet, this motivation says a lot about the nature of the call to teaching. Educators respond to the child. Teachers are compelled to make a difference. The class clown may well be the next prime minister; the class scholar may be the social deviant. The call is that which directs us to the moment of change. We wait for moments in which we may be able

to initiate a response leading to change; teachers wait for moments of opportunities to make a difference. Without waiting for these moments can one claim that they are called to teaching? The essence of teaching is motivated by an anticipation for change. Rob points out...

> I have always had an interest in passing on knowledge and inspiring thought and dialogue with others. Teaching proved to be the best alternative. Also, I had some very influential teachers, even as far back as elementary. I could name 3 or 4 influenced me in the direction of teaching -- not through dialogue but by example.

The call is transferable by a hope of replication. Because, as a student, the teacher was inspired, the teacher experiences the call by waiting for the moment of replicating the moment of inspiration with another student. The essence of the call is lived in the moment of discovery. The call is the moment of heightened responsibility and awareness of discovery. The awareness of discovery is the moment that is remembered, even after the lesson of the day has been forgotten.

There is another theme that the humanitarian seeks. It is living with and in an understanding of challenge and lived out as an "awesome responsibility." In Rob's case, he is driven to teach students because of the "influence teachers have on children." The teacher lives the call in terms of being conscious of the "influence" they have as by merely being in the position as an educator.

Rob understands this dimension when he states:

> It is an awesome responsibility and challenge, but I enjoy these aspects. It is to me one of the most important jobs in society because of the influence teachers have on their students. They can change their lives (both parts involved) either positively or negatively.

Teachers are motivated by being conscious of this role of influence. Rob points out that a teacher's influence can be positive or negative.

Nicole's Narrative: The Uncertainty of the Present: Giving a Glimmer of Hope

Nicole also speaks of the uncertainty of a present action in regard to the future; yet, she is motivated in a pedagogical moment as "friend" and "councillor."

> My first year of teaching I taught a girl who was living in an abusive home. I was the only consistent person in her life who cared...Finally, in the last month of school social services put her in a [foster] care home. I really hope that I ministered to her as much as she did to me. I couldn't believe the wisdom and the strength that 8 year old had. She reaching out to others with kindness when she had been hurt so much.

Nicole sought to make a difference in a child's life. Nicole hoped to provide comfort in the present as a way to secure a glimmer of hope

for her student's future. Nicole's notion of humanitarian responds to the nurture and care of this young girl who is caught in a difficult social environment. Nicole is conscious that her efforts may not reap the changes she hopes they will. She responds nevertheless, knowing that she can at least help the child in the moment in which she is engaged with her teacher. Nicole seeks wisdom to help her student. The pedagogical moment is mutual as Nicole reflects on how much she learned from the experience. Nicole marveled at how the child responded even amidst trying times. "She reaching out to others with kindness when she had been hurt so much." The final words express the uncertainty of hope, "I hope that I helped her not only as an educator but also as a friend and as a spiritual guide."

Michelle's Narrative: Being Conscious of a Teacher's Influence on Her Students

Michelle shares a similar lived experience. She recalls:

> **Originally, I didn't realize the influence I would have as a teacher. I had always felt a call to be a missionary. Over the last few years of my teaching career I realize I am a missionary and that I have a "captive" audience to minister to.**

Experience has taught Michelle about the realization of the impact teachers have on their students. Each year of experience suggests that the call is understood in terms of humanitarianism as a growing process in which the teacher continues to articulate and become more precise and conscious of the influence they become to students. The awareness moves away from the activity of instruction to the impact of the teacher/student relationship. The call is understood in terms of that moment of growing response to the nature of the relationship.

Susan's Narrative: The Positive Role Model

Susan supports the consciousness of the impact teachers make on children's lives. Susan points out that she is animated by the fact that she believes she can make a positive contribution to the lives of children. The essence of the call is reflected in the belief of being a positive role model and wanting the best for her students.

> **I have an impact on the kids' lives and I feel I can impact them in a positive way.**

Maryanne's Narrative: Viewing the Entire Child

Maryanne expresses the nature of the pedagogue as she is animated by the response of children to her teaching. At an early age, Maryanne experienced fulfillment in relating to children. Maryanne also envisions children in a multiplicity of understandings.

> **I had the opportunity to teach 4 and 5 year olds in a summer program when I was in grade 9. I felt very fulfilled and challenged by the opportunity. I was very excited to see the children respond:**

Socially--talking, playing games, listening to instruction and learning new games.

Educationally-- understanding the stories and the implications those had on their lives.

Emotionally-- relating to peers and to me as their teacher. A friendship and trust developed...

Maryanne is also moved by seeing the child in terms of an entire being. Her considerations for teaching are not limited to a responsibility for the intellectual development of the students. The essence of the call is understood in Maryanne's experience as being responsible for the entire student's maturity. Maryanne experiences a desire to promote the social, educational, and emotional development of her students. Maryanne sees her responsibility fulfilled through the preparation of the child to engage in life. The nature of the call is expressed with present preparation for the future in mind. Maryanne finds purpose in realizing the impact she has on her students and being animated to interact with them presently in a hope that such interaction will have an impact on them in future life. Preparing children for the future animates Maryanne as the teacher.

REFLECTIONS

Educators are driven to "make a difference." They have a social consciousness which drives them to move their students to a way of living which provides more options later in life. Perhaps the common frustration that educators mutually experience when dealing with the child who doesn't care. Teachers, by their nature, care. Teachers wait for that glimmer of hope when children are engaged in a moment of finding meaning in their experiences of learning. Educators seek a common ground of mutual interaction. If they can move a child to even consider that they should care many educators believe they have at least been partially successful.

The educator as humanitarian is concerned with the student, but is also concerned with a global perspective of humanity. Students must be able to survive in a world which engages them with new challenges. Teachers recognize that the impact they have on students goes beyond the textbook. Being a positive influence is found in goals like long-term rewards, a sense of well being, a sense of accomplishment, and the experience of sharing human realities. Sharing moments that prepare students for these challenges is the nature of deriving purpose in terms of a humanitarian. To be motivated by that pedagogical moment of change in students is one more dimension of the essence of the call to teaching.

CHAPTER X

THE METAPHOR OF FAITH

PERSONAL NARRATIVE

I will never forget the day of the cross-eyed-frog. A girl had brought her pet frog to school in a glass jar. The frog sat on the bottom of the jar gazing out into the world of friendly inquisitive children. I was privileged as I sat right across from the frog. I marvelled at his color, his bumps on his body, and his good fortune of being owned by one of my classmates. During my day-dream the teacher asked the class to stand for morning assembly. As we sang O'Canada and then repeated The Lord's Prayer, "...give us each day our daily bread..." I happened to glance over at the frog. The frog was hard pressed against the jar. In that moment he looked at me and turned his eyes inward to one another, thus, going cross-eyed. I instantly burst out laughing loudly during the Lord' prayer, to which my teacher sternly sent me out of the classroom. My teacher declared, "She would have no sacrilege in her class." I walked out, head down, feeling betrayed by that stupid cross-eyed-frog.

. . .

I have often wondered in later days if my teacher had discovered the child. Had she heard my story? I discovered the child in those moments of reflection. I have often wondered if she had, unknowing to me, turned her face away from me, deliberately, in order to hide the grin that demonstrated she had discovered the child-like-innocence of the moment. It really makes no difference, she still remains one of my favorite teachers in my memories. Perhaps because she captured some other moments of discovering me as the child."

I have often mused that in those brief moments the question, Why do frogs go cross-eyed? Simply, to make little children giggle, in order to get them in trouble, as a way of getting even for putting him in a jar.

EDUCATIONAL NARRATIVES

> And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, "Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all. " And He took them in His arms and began blessing them, laying His hands upon them. (Mark 10:13-16 NASV)

Amidst a busy day full of activity Jesus took time to recognize the importance of all human beings in His kingdom. In that moment He

recognized and taught His disciples to hear the special voices of children.

There is something special about the way we listen to children. To listen to children is to recognize that they have something to say. It is a moment in which we direct our thoughts toward the child before us. It is a moment in which the child becomes central to our activity. The way we listen to children may well tell us more about motives behind teaching than any other element of our teaching praxis.

If we are concerned more about our voices being heard, we forget to hear the nature of our question. Perhaps the greatest sign that we have failed to listen is when students sit idly by as spectators of a drama unfolding before them. It is not until they are engaged in learning that noise of the classroom embraces the pedagogical moment. Perhaps we look for the wrong signs to tell us the moment has begun. Perhaps we must move the child before us to see and hear the lesson of the day.

. . .

> ... because it gives him (the master teacher) the power of doing good; and who has made up his mind to live and to die in the service of primary instruction, which to him is the service of God and his fellow creatures.(Ryerson, p.157. 1847)

> As there may be a very careful teaching of some of the ornamental branches of learning, while the essential and practical departments of it are very carelessly, if at all taught; so it notoriously occurs that scrupulous and ostentatious maintenance and teaching of the 'mint, anise, and cummin' of a vain and grasping sectarianism is accompanied with an equally notorious disregard of the "weightier matters of the law" of religion and morality. (Ryerson, p.22, 1847)

> ...An American writer, whose standard of religious orthodoxy has been considered as questionable as his talents were exalted, has nevertheless said on this subject: "The exaltation of talent, as it is called, above virtue and religion, is the curse of this age.-- Education is now chiefly a stimulus to learning, and thus men acquire power without the principles which alone make it a good. Talent is worshipped; but if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a demon than a god." (Ryerson, p. 31, 1847)

> The Teacher being amply possessed by knowledge of the whole chain of events, and of all biographical incidents; and bringing to the exercise a heart glowing with love to man, and with devotion to his duty, as a former of the character of children, has no necessity or occasion to fall back upon the formulas of a creed. It is when the Teacher has no knowledge of the wonderful works of God, and of the benevolence of the design in which they were created; when he has no power of explaining and applying the beautiful incidents in the lives of the prophets and apostles, and especially the perfect example which is given to men in the life of Jesus Christ; it is then, that, in attempting to give religious instruction, he is, at it were, constrained to recur again and again to the new words or sentences of his form of faith, whatever that faith may be; and therefore when

giving the second lesson, it will be little more than the repetition of th first, and the two hundreth lesson, at the end of the year will differ from that at the beginning only in accumulated wearisomeness and monotony." (Ryerson, p. 39, 1847) [(Quote from Mr. Mann's Seventh Annual Report pages 144-145.]

TEACHERS' NARRATIVES

The narratives revealed that many teachers derived purpose in teaching through a religious commitment of faith in God. This finding is no surprise, given the choice of participants. The religious faith provided them with a sense of being. The principal purpose for their instruction was their belief that God had called them into teaching. They also saw teaching in terms of being a guide, counselor, nurturer, and leader of children.

Their stories demonstrate a compassion for children. Their faith provided a foundation for commitment to the task of teaching. Teachers did not see religious education in terms of proselyting; rather, they saw their commitment to their faith in terms of providing a role model of faith in action. The integration of faith and learning was seen as an integral component of education. The integration was not understood as a curriculum based on religious instruction, but in terms of teacher commitment to both parent and student, a commitment to staff, and a faith in God exemplified through a caring and nurturing attitude toward each student.

Teachers expressed a holistic approach to their instruction to children. Children were envisioned in terms of having three needs -- intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. A teacher's purpose was thus established when each dimension was cared for. This purpose was acquainted with a love commitment to their God, translated to their students. It was understanding their beliefs as being active in their administration of teaching.

Faith provided security and hope. Faith established an affirmation of gifts in teaching and provided an understanding of being in a place of service for God. The skills for teaching were understood as gifts from God, to be used for His glory. Purpose was established in love for God and a believed commitment by teachers to do their best as this was understood in terms of obedience. Religious instruction was not seen merely as an intellectual exercise. Establishing and sharing hope through modeling an example of caring was central.

Nicole's Narrative: Hope Founded in Faith

> **My first year of teaching I taught a girl that was living in an abusive home. I was the only consistent person in her life who cared about her emotional, <u>spiritual</u>, and educational growth. I remember praying with her about her situation... <u>I hope</u> that I helped her not only as an educator but also as a friend and as a spiritual guide.**

Nicole's motivation is seen in relation to her faith in God. It is expressed in her compassion for the needs of her student and exemplified in modeling a hope that, Nicole, has found hope and security in. Nicole establishes purpose by trusting that her ministry as a teacher will have a future effect on the life of her young student. Nicole's sense of call

draws her toward the student in the context of the student's life of needs. Nicole is burdened by the plight of her young student. Nicole seeks to provide comfort and hope. Nicole hopes that her efforts can provide the young student with a model of a caring friend and a spiritual guide.

Michelle's Narrative: Faith in Action

> I LOVE IT! I like learning about the subjects I am teaching. I love the kids and interacting with them, and the fact that there's never a dull moment. Lastly, but not least, I know I'm where God has placed me.
>
> Because God has gifted me with a natural ability to teach and I know He enables me to do my best. It's my ministry.
>
> Originally I didn't realize the influence I would have as a teacher. I had always felt a call to be a missionary.
>
> Realizing the affects I have on people's lives has helped me tremendously in my career. Knowing that I have the opportunity to minister to students and or parents, and, or, staff is a wonderful thing. I also recognize the role God has placed me in, and how He will give me strength to be the best I can be in that role.

Michelle's understanding of faith provides an opportunity to practice faith in action. She sees each moment of her day as an opportunity to express her faith in love for her students. She is motivated by a strong belief that her faith in God is providing a purpose and strength for accomplishing her role as teacher. The role is given meaning simply because a "greater" purpose is understood in the given incident. Each moment provides a recognition of the sovereignty of God which is established in her belief system.

Michelle's faith establishes purpose in that she believes that God has placed her in the school in relation to a specific time, specific place, and specific students. When times get tough she is reminded that her commitment in faith establishes purpose for her circumstances. She sees God as her source of strength. It is her faith that provides her with commitment to the task at hand.

Michelle also believes that her gifts in teaching are initiated through her belief in God. This faith provides a basis for using her gifts as an act of worship to God.

Susan's Narrative: Devotion to God

> I am reminded in these moments that I need to get my acceptance and approval from God rather than my students.

A common tendency of many beginning teachers is to seek approval of the students as a way establishing a rapport with the students. Susan suggests that approval is associated with her faith in that her purpose is derived first in pleasing God. Once this is established she finds consolation in her faith, and her students are afforded her self-acceptance and strength.

> My decision to stay in the profession was influenced by the promises of God. I know God has called me to be a teacher. I am confident that He (God) has not left me here to fail. I still have "feelings" of inadequacy. I am continually reminded about why I am where I am--God has placed me there.

Susan also encompasses an understanding that teaching to her is a divine calling. In her daily struggles as a growing maturing teacher, she reflects on her belief system in order to deal with feelings of inadequacy. The promises of God is a reflection of her belief in the scriptures as being a series of principles that can guide and direct her life. Susan finds stability and comfort from her faith. Her personal faith provides a purpose for being a teacher.

Maryanne's Narrative: Viewing the Child of Faith

Maryanne's Narrative expresses a delight in seeing children respond in faith toward God.

> It is fulfilling to help children/students learn and develop new skills. Each day is challenging and exciting to relate to students--guiding and building their lives socially, educationally, emotionally, and spiritually.
>
> ...I was very excited to see the children respond:
>
> Socially--talking, playing games, listening to instruction and learning new games.
>
> Educationally-- understanding the stories and the implications those had on their lives.
>
> Emotionally-- relating to peers and to me as their teacher. A friendship and trust developed.
>
> Spiritually-- response to God's love and the love of people in the program.
>
> -- response of kindness, sharing, gentleness, etc.

Faith guides Maryanne's understanding of the nature of people. Her holistic understanding of human beings encompasses social, educational, emotional, and spiritual needs. Maryanne is motivated by her love for children and a desire to see them grow and develop each area of their lives. Maryanne is called to respond to the entire needs of children in her care, both as a mother (previous narratives) and presently as a full time teacher.

Jim's Narrative: Faith Directs Service

Jim equates faith with talents associated with teaching. He also has a sense of purpose established by an urge that God has a purpose in his life. The faith Jim demonstrates is personal.

I feel it is a good use of my talents, I feel this is what God wants me to do.

I plan on going into full-time pastoral ministry in the future, so my reasons for teaching is also as "in between" career, (to raise money and gain experience)

I remember teaching in La Crete and getting sick and stressed out. It revealed some personal revelations from God speaking to me about how He wanted me to go into the pastorate, but possibly to wait. After I quit the job, I didn't know if I would teach again.

I am eventually leaving the position to pursue my hearts desire, full-time ministry, I still love teaching, so I am continuing teaching until finances are raised.

Jim demonstrates that he establishes purpose by his trust and commitment in faith to God. Jim believes in the sovereignty of God to direct Jim in what ever area He pleases. Jim's faith is expressed through a use of his talents for God. This expression is important in Jim's understanding of his faith and relationship to God.

It is also important to see that faith leads the individual to address a place of service for God. Though Jim loves teaching he reflects on the nature of teaching and measures it toward other options. The call is understood as a life commitment to the leading of God. In this case Jim expresses a desire to leave teaching and pursue the ministry as a pastor.

REFLECTIONS

The essence of the call can be understood in terms of a faith commitment to God. Teachers who are motivated by their faith commitments see their calling as initiated, substantiated, and supported by God. The calling then can be understood in terms of a Divine Calling. It is characterized by a belief that God has initiated a desire to love children and has provided the teacher with gifts to meet the needs of children.

A faith commitment also establishes a purpose for teaching in that it provides a basis for service. Children are seen as people of needs. Faith in God demands a response to the needs of children. It establishes a commitment to help children nurture all avenues of their lives.

A faith commitment does not mean that the teacher does not find purpose in other areas, such as monetary or other extrinsic motivators; but faith is the key factor to establishing purpose. Personal faith in God motivates the teacher through a commitment of love to God which is expressed in care, nurture, and love for their students. It provides a foundation for struggles and personal development. The essence of the call is established in the metaphor of faith.

CHAPTER XI

QUESTIONS ARISING FROM THE RESEARCH

This research project provided me with a wonderful opportunity to examine the essence of the call to teaching through the narrative expressions of teachers. The narratives were written by numerous teachers in the profession for this research project. The narratives were initiated by answering numerous questions relating to the initial question. The narratives provided a rich source of stories. Their stories focused on how teachers derive and establish purpose in their professional careers. Many questions emerged from the process of reviewing and articulating the research data. The questions arising from the research provide a wonderful source for pursing the initial question in more depth. The following is a synopsis of some of the major questions that grew out the study and how they could be researched.

1. Does purpose change over years of teaching?

The teachers in the study encompassed a wide range of chronological age and backgrounds. The teachers also represented a wide range of teaching experience. It would be interesting to examine the changing nature of establishing purpose in the career. A study in this area might have teachers reflect about how purpose has changed in terms of pre-teaching experiences, first-years of teaching experiences, and, finally, present experiences in the field. Does purpose change over years of teaching praxis? The study could focus on teachers identifying factors that lead to a change in establishing purpose which leads to motivation.

2. What is the essence of success in teaching?

A common theme that emerged from the research was the teacher's desire to succeed. This desire to succeed was mentioned as an important component of establishing motivation in teaching. A study to examine the success in teaching would be an interesting and useful study. The study could examine the nature of success, in how success is understood by teachers, and, finally, in how teachers have gained success in their careers.

3. What is the nature of affirmation and how does it affect teacher development?

One theme that emerged from the narratives is that many teachers recalled their childhood experiences as a way of identifying their first affirmation of entering the teaching profession. It would be interesting to do a study in which one looks at the pedagogical significance of lived-experiences which establishes an identity of the teacher. Within this study, the researcher could also examine why teachers attach specific events to their purposes in teaching today. Equally important in such a study would be an examination of the nature of affirmation and its affect on professional growth.

4. **What is the experience of successful teachers?**

Finally, a research study on establishing whether teachers who have a defined purpose in their teaching are recognized by students and staff as "master" teachers. By master teachers, I mean teachers who are considered by others to exemplify the skills and attitudes necessary to be highly successful in their careers. It would be interesting to discover the nature of these master teachers' success and how they derive purpose for what they are doing. Is there a correlation between a strong sense of purpose and being successful in teaching? The study could also examine the nature of teachers who have left the profession to pursue other career as a comparison to those who have stayed in the profession and are considered master teachers.

5. **What is the nature of motivation? How is it experienced in the following two professions?**

Research could also be conducted that studies in a parallel fashion, two professions in terms of establishing purpose. A study might look at the nature of motivation. How do we establish or encourage motivation?.

6. **Does the essence of the call change in teaching? How does a change in the call influence our decisions to change careers?**

Finally, a study could be conducted in which a careful examination of teachers who have retired and or left their career completely for another career for reasons like stress, other goals, etc. It would be interesting to see why teachers determined to change careers. Have they changed their call? What changed their perspective of the call? How do they view a change in careers in relation to their notion of call? When is it time for a change?

CHAPTER XII

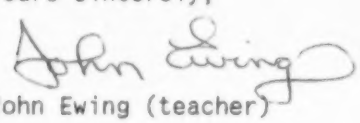
A FINAL CALL TO TEACHERS

The entire research project has been a narrative expression of my personal journey to discover the nature of my teaching. It is the pursuit of the question, why is the essence of being called in teaching? The research project has included a vast sum of reading experiences on the subject and has included an examination of my own personal reflection, coupled with an identification with other teacher's personal reflections through narrative expressions. The study is also to be a guide to educators to initiate reflection about the nature of why they teach. It is my hope that by sharing my journey other educators will also discover the rich meanings they place on specific lived-experiences that they attach to their personal teaching experiences.

I invite educators to consider why they teach as a way to initiate and articulate a strong sense of purpose in their careers. I believe strongly that our profession is an important profession. I am tired of hearing an apologetic tone among new recruits as they tell others that they are teachers as if teaching were considered a second class professional career. It is time to renew a sense of purpose in teaching. It is time to state, I am a teacher by choice, not because there were no other choices available to me. Teachers are unique individuals. Their shared narratives tell me that. I know your narrative would also express the nature of the pedagogue.

My journey has been a wonderful opportunity to engage in personal growth in my chosen profession. The essence of the call in teaching is a personal journey of pedagogical discovery. I hope you will take time to go on similar journey and share your story with other professionals in your field. The essence of the call to teaching is the nature and essence of being pedagogue.

Yours sincerely,



John Ewing (teacher)

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APPENDIX A

RESEARCH OVERVIEW FOR PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

Please read the following material carefully before you begin.

FOCUS OF STUDY:

The focus of this research is on the professional development of teachers. My research will use personal reflection to identify and articulate the reasons that are given by teachers for entering, leaving, and, or, staying in the teaching profession. The research attempts to identify and examine the concept of 'purpose' as established by the lived-experiences of teachers in the field of education.

I have entitled my research, "What is the Essence of Being Called in Teaching." While I recognize that 'call' can be understood in many ways (this will be highlighted in the research) my research seeks to examine the lived-experiences of teachers as they reflect upon their 'purpose' for being in the profession.

UNIVERSITY GUIDE LINES

I am writing this letter to inform you of the following information so that you may understand your rights as a participant in a research project. During the conduct of my research, I will adhere to the strict policies that the University of Alberta has put into place regarding research. Before any research can begin my research project must pass an ethical review committee. The following research project has been passed by the review committee.

I would like to indicate that any information that is received from the participant will be kept confidential.

I will guarantee full anonymity by using fictitious names.

To guard each person's anonymity I will refuse to allow any of the participants to use of their real name in the research project even if permission is granted.

The information that is collected will be not be used except in this research project. I will obtain written permission from each of the contributing participants if any further use of their personal material is required.(eg. published materials).

Each participant has the right to end his or her participation at anytime during the research project. Upon this request all information regarding the individual participant will be destroyed.

EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL

I have enclosed in this research data pack four sections: Part I. Biographical; Part II. Educational; Part III. Narrative; Part IV. Postreflections.

APPENDIX A

Part I provides me with information in terms of age, gender, and educational history. This establishes a context to place other findings. It also provides a context to examine relationships that are not covered in the research but may lead to a basis for further research questions. I ask that you fill this information out as completely as possible.

Part II is a series of questions intended to help the teachers examine their careers in terms of identifying purpose for being a teacher. The questions attempt to provide a general basis for further questions in the interview. I would ask that you fill in this section and give this to me about one week before your scheduled interview. This will help me to prepare for further questions if it is needed.

Part III asks you to write two short anecdotes which describes two independent incidents that you had to face in your career. At first write the anecdote as it happened. Do not attempt to interpret your findings in the story. You may want to jot down some of your reasons for choosing the story, and what it meant to you on a separate piece of paper. During the interview I will ask you to elaborate on specific aspects of your story.

I will ask you to rewrite your story after our initial interview including a synopsis of your reflections on your story (Our interview should bring up a number of interesting points you might want to talk about). I will collect this material from you. Once we have agreed upon the accuracy of this story and reflections it will become part of the research data.

Part IV. After we have completed this story, I will ask you to complete the final questions. These questions will be have you reflect on your teaching profession in regards to purpose.

APPENDIX A

PART I. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The following information is confidential. I will guarantee full anonymity by using fictitious names. To guard each person's anonymity I will refuse to allow anyone to use of their real name in the research project. The information that is collected will be not be used except in this research project. I will obtain written permission from each of the contributing participants if any further use of their material is required.(eg. published materials).

Please fill in the following information:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:_____

Circle the following information that applies to you.

Gender: Male Female

Age Group: 20-25 26-30 31-35 36-40 40-45
46- 50 51-55 56-60 60-over

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Previous Full-Time Post-Secondary Education

Name(s) and place of Institution Last Attended	Program/Faculty	Degree held
1.		
2.		
3.		

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

Total number of years in teaching _____.

School Name	Subject(s)	Grade Level(s)	# of Years
1.			
2.			
3.			

What grade level(s) and subject(s) are you presently teaching?

Other Careers

Is teaching your first career?

If not, what was your previous career(s)?

How long were you in this previous career(s) before you started teaching?

PART II. QUESTIONS TO INITIATE DISCUSSION

1. When did you first think about pursuing the teaching profession?

2. Can you think of some circumstances that directed you into this profession?

3. Was teaching your first choice for a profession after you left high school?

4. Why have you stayed in teaching?

5. Why do you teach?

6. Has your reasons for teaching changed over the years of teaching? If so, describe some of the changes.

PART III. NARRATIVE EXPRESSION

Please take some time to reflect on the following questions and write two short anecdotal stories that will address each of the following two areas (one anecdotal story for each question). Please answer the reflection question after you have completed your story.

1. Story Number One

   Describe an incident in your teaching profession or life which helped you to confirm a personal reason for being a teacher. If there are many incidents attempt to choose one which is the most meaningful to you.

   Reflection: How has the incident helped you to confirm a personal reason(s) for being a teacher.

2. Story Number Two

   Write about a time in which you faced doubt to whether you wanted to continue teaching?

   Reflection:
   What influenced your decision to stay or leave the profession?

PART IV. POSTREFLECTION

What advice would you give a beginning teacher in establishing a consciousness of belonging to the profession. Do you feel this is important? In what ways?

Do you feel that identifying purpose in teaching has helped you in your career? How has it? If it is not that important, then state why you think so.